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THE

PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY;

IN A

COURSE OF LECTURES,

DELIVERED AT VIENNA,

BY FREDERICK VON SCHLEGEL.

36455
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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN,

WITH A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR,

BY JAMES BURTON ROBERTSON, ESQ.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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MEMOIR

OF THE LITERARY LIFE

OF

FREDERICK VON SCHLEGEL.

In the following sketch of the literary life of the late Frederick Von Schlegel, it is the intention of the writer to take a rapid review of that author's principal productions, noticing the circumstances out of which they grew, and the influence they exerted on his age; giving at the same time a fuller analysis of his political and metaphysical systems:—an analysis which is useful, nay almost necessary to the elucidation of very many passages in the work, to which this memoir is prefixed. Of the inadequacy of his powers to the due execution of such a task, none can be more fully sensible than the writer himself; but he trusts that he will experience from the kindness of the reader, an indulgence proportionate to the difficulty of the undertaking.

In offering to the British public a translation of one of the last works of one among the most illustrious of German writers, the Translator is aware, that after the excellent translation which appeared in 1818

of this author's "History of Literature," and also after the admirable translation of his brother's "Lectures on Dramatic Literature," by Mr. Black, his own performance must appear in a very disadvantageous point of view. But this is a circumstance which only gives it additional claims to indulgent consideration.

The family of the Schlegels seem to have been peculiarly favoured by the Muses. Elias Schlegel, a member of this family, was a distinguished dramatic writer in his own time; and some of his plays are, I believe, acted in Germany at the present day. Adolphus Schlegel, the father of the subject of the present biography, was a minister of the Lutheran church, distinguished for his literary talents, and particularly for eloquence in the pulpit. His eldest son, Charles Augustus Schlegel, entered with the Hanoverian regiment to which he belonged into the service of our East India Company, and had begun to prosecute with success his studies in Sanscrit literature—a field of knowledge in which his brothers have since obtained so much distinction—when his youthful career was unhappily terminated by the hand of death. Augustus William Schlegel, the second son, who was destined to carry to so high a pitch the literary glory of his family, was born at Hanover in 1769—a year so propitious to the birth of genius. Frederick Schlegel was born at Hanover in 1772. Though destined for commerce, he received a highly classical education; and in his sixteenth year prevailed on his father to allow him to devote himself to the Belles Lettres. After completing his academical course at Gottingen and Leipzig, he rejoined his brother, and became associated with him in his literary labours. He has himself given us the interesting picture of his own mind at this early period. "In my first youth," says he, "from the age of seventeen and upwards, the writings of Plato, the Greek tragedians, and Winkelmann's

enthusiastic works, formed the intellectual world in which I lived, and where I often strove in a youthful manner, to represent to my soul the ideas and images of ancient gods and heroes. In the year 1789, I was enabled, for the first time, to gratify my inclination in that capital so highly refined by art—Dresden; and I was as much surprised as delighted to see really before me those antique figures of gods I had so long desired to behold. Among these I often tarried for hours, especially in the incomparable collection of Mengs's casts, which were then to be found, disposed in a state of little order in the Brühl garden, where I often let myself be shut up, in order to remain without interruption. It was not the consummate beauty of form alone, which satisfied and even exceeded the expectation I had secretly formed; but it was still more the life — the animation in those Olympic marbles, which excited my astonishment; for the latter qualities I had been less able to picture to myself in my solitary musings. These first indelible impressions were in succeeding years, the firm, enduring groundwork for my study of classical antiquity."* Here he found the sacred fire, at which his genius lit the torch destined to blaze through his life with inextinguishable brightness.

He commenced his literary career in 1794, with a short essay on the different schools of Greek poetry. It is curious to watch in this little piece the buddings of his mind. Here we see, as it were, the germ of the first part of the great work on ancient and modern literature, which he published nearly twenty years afterwards. We are astonished to find in a youth of twenty-two an erudition so extensive—an acquaintance not only with the more celebrated poets and philosophers of ancient Greece, but also with the obscure,

* Sämmtliche werke, vorrede, p. 8. vol. 6.

recondite Alexandrian poets, known to comparatively few scholars even of a maturer age. We admire, too, the clearness of analytic arrangement—the admirable method of classification, in which the author and his brother have ever so far outshone the generality of German writers. The essay displays, also, a delicacy of observation and an originality of views, which announce the great critic. It is, in short, the labour of an infant Hercules.

As this essay gives promise of a mighty critic; so two treatises, which the author wrote in the following years, 1795 and 1796—one entitled "Diotima," and which treats of the condition of the female sex in ancient Greece—the other, a parallel between Cæsar and Alexander, not published, however, till twenty-six years afterwards—both show the dawnings of his great historical genius. Rarely have the promises of youth been so amply fulfilled—rarely has the green foliage of Spring been followed by fruits so rich and abundant. It is interesting to observe the fine, organic development of Schlegel's mental powers—to trace in these early productions, the germs of those great historical works which it was reserved for his manhood and age to achieve. In the latter and most remarkable of these essays, he examines the respective merits of Cæsar and Alexander, considered as men, as generals, and as statesmen. To the Macedonian he assigns greater tenderness of feeling, a more generous and lofty disinterestedness of character—and a finer power of perception for the beauties of art. To the Roman he ascribes greater coolness and sobriety of judgment, an extraordinary degree of self-controul, a mind tenacious of its purpose, but careless as to the means by which it was accomplished, an exquisite sense of fitness and propriety in the smallest as in the greatest things, yet little susceptibility for the beautiful in art. With respect to military genius, he shows that Cæsar united

to the fire and rapidity of the Macedonian, greater constancy and perseverance; yet that the temerity of Alexander was not always the effect of impetuous passion, but sometimes the result at once of situation and deliberate reflection. As regards the political capacities of these two great conquerors, he shows that Cæsar possessed an over-mastering ascendancy over the minds of men—the talent of guiding their wills, and making them subservient to his own views and interests—in short, a consummate skill in the tactics of a party-leader. Yet he thinks him destitute of the wisdom of a law-giver, or what he emphatically calls, the *organic genius of state* — the power to found, or renovate a constitution. To Alexander, on the contrary, he attributes the plastic genius of legislation—the will and the ability to diffuse among nations the blessings of civilization—to plant cities, and establish free, flourishing and permanent communities.

In the year 1797, Schlegel published his first important work, entitled "the Greeks and the Romans." This work was two or three years afterwards followed by another, entitled "History of Greek Poetry." These two writings in their original form are no longer to be met with—for in the new edition of the author's works, they not only have undergone various alterations and additions, but have been, as it were, melted into one work. Winkelmann's history of art was the model which Schlegel proposed to himself in this history of Greek poetry; and we must allow that the noble school which that illustrious man, as well as Lessing, Herder, and Goethe, had founded in Germany, never received a richer acquisition than in the work here spoken of. Prior to the illustrious writers I have named, Germany had produced a multitude of scholars distinguished for profound learning and critical acuteness; but their labours may be considered as only ancillary and preliminary to the works of men who,

with an erudition and a perspicacity never surpassed, united a poetical sense and a philosophic discernment that could catch the spirit of antiquity, reanimate her forms, and place them in all their living freshness before our eyes.

In the first chapter of the "History of Greek Poetry," Schlegel speaks of the religious rites and mysteries of the primitive Greeks, and of the Orphic poetry to which they gave rise. Contrary to the opinion of many scholars who, though they admit the present form of the Orphic hymns to be the work of a later period, yet refer their substance to a very remote antiquity, Schlegel assigns their origin to the age of Hesiod. "Enthusiasm," he says, "is the characteristic of the Orphic poetry — repose that of the Homeric poems." His observations however on the early religion of the Greeks, form, in my humble opinion, the least satisfactory portion of this work. He next gives an interesting account of the state of society in Greece in the age of Homer, as well as in the one preceding, and shews by a long process of inductive evidence, how the Homeric poetry was the crown and perfection of a long series of Bardic poems.

He then examines, at great length, the opinions of the ancients from the earliest Greek to the latest Roman critics, on the plan, the diction and poetical merits of the Iliad and the Odyssey; interweaving in this review of ancient criticism his own remarks, which serve either to correct the errors, supply the deficiencies, or illustrate the wisdom of those ancient judges of art. After this survey of ancient criticism, he proceeds to point out some of the characteristic features of the Homeric poems. He enquires what is understood by natural poetry, or the poetry of nature; shews that it is perfectly compatible with art— that there is a wide difference between the natural and

the rude—that Homer is distinguished as much for delicacy of perception, accuracy of delineation, and sagacity of judgment, as for fertility of fancy and energy of passion. The author next passes in review the Hesiodic epos, the middle epos, or the works of the Cyclic poets, and lastly, the productions of the Ionic, Æolic, and Doric schools of lyric poetry. The fragments on the lyric poetry of Greece are particularly beautiful, and comprise not only excellent criticisms on the genius of the different lyrists themselves, but also most interesting observations on the character, manners, and social institutions of the races that composed the Hellenic confederacy.

It was Schlegel's intention to have given a complete history of Greek poetry; but the execution of this task was abandoned, not from any want of perseverance, as some have imagined, but from some peculiar circumstances in the world of letters at that period. The literary scepticism of Wolf, supported with so much learning and ability, was then convulsing the German mind; and while the purity of the Homeric text, and the unity and integrity of the Homeric poems themselves were so ably contested, Schlegel deemed it a hazardous task to attempt to draw public attention to any æsthetic enquiries on the elder Greek poetry. Hence the second part of this work, which treats of the lyric poets, remained unfinished. The general qualities, which must strike all in this history of Greek poetry are, a masterly acquaintance with classical literature—a wariness and circumspection of judgment, rare in any writer, especially in one so young—a critical perspicacity, that draws its conclusions fron the widest range of observation—and a poetic flexibility of fancy, that can transport itself into the remotest periods of antiquity. In a word, the author analyzes as a critic, feels as a poet, and observes like a philosopher.

But a new career now expanded before the ardent mind of Schlegel. The enterprising spirit of British scholars had but twenty years before opened a new intellectual world to European inquiry :—a world many of whose spiritual productions, disguised in one shape or another, the Western nations had for a long course of ages admired and enjoyed, ignorant as they were of the precise region from which they were brought. For the knowledge of the Sanscrit tongue and literature—an event in literary importance inferior only to the revival of Greek learning, and in a religious and philosophic point of view, pregnant, perhaps, with greater results ;—mankind have been indebted to the influence of British commerce ; and it is not one of the least services which that commerce has rendered to the cause of civilization. In the promotion of Sanscrit learning, the merchant princes of Britain emulated the noble zeal displayed four centuries before by the merchant princes of Florence, in the encouragement and diffusion of Hellenic literature. By dint of promises and entreaties, they extorted from the Brahmin the mystic key, which has opened to us so many wonders of the primitive world. And as a great Christian philosopher of our age* has observed, it is fortunate that India was not then under the dominion of the French ; for during the irreligious fever which inflamed and maddened that great people, their insidious guides—those detestable sophists of the eighteenth century—would most assuredly have leagued with the Brahmins to suppress the truth, to mutilate the ancient monuments of Sanscrit lore, and thus would have for ever poisoned the sources of Indian learning. A British society was established at Calcutta —whose object it was to investigate the languages, historical antiquities, sciences, and religious and philosophical

* Count Maistre.—See his Soirées de St. Petersbourg.

systems of Asia, and more especially of Hindostan. Sir William Jones—a name that will be revered as long as genius, learning, and Christian philosophy command the respect of mankind—was the soul of this enterprise. He brought to the investigation of Indian literature and history, a mind stored with the treasures of classical and oriental scholarship—a spirit of indefatigable activity—and a clear, methodical and capacious intellect. No man, too, so fully understood the religious bearings of these inquiries, and had so well seized the whole subject of Asiatic antiquities in its connection with the Bible. But at the period at which we have arrived, this great spirit had already taken its departure; nor in its flight had it dropped its mantle of inspiration on any of the former associates of its labours. For among the academicians of Calcutta, though there were men of undoubted talent and learning, there were none who inherited the philosophic mind of Jones. At this period, too, the fanciful temerity of a Wilford was bringing discredit on the Indian researches—a temerity which would necessarily provoke a re-action, and lead, as in some recent instances, to a prosaic narrow-mindedness, that would seek to bring down the whole system of Indian civilization to the dull level of its own vulgar conceptions.

Schlegel saw that the moment was critical. He saw that the edifice of oriental learning, raised at the cost of so much labour by Sir William Jones, was in danger of falling to pieces—that all the mighty results which Christian philosophy had anticipated from these inquiries, would be, if not frustrated, at least indefinitely postponed—that a wild, uncritical, extravagant fancifulness on the one hand, or a dull and dogged Rationalism on the other—(equally adverse as both are to the cause of historic truth)—would soon bring these researches into inextricable confusion; in short, that the time had arrived when they should be

fairly brought before the more enlarged philosophy of Germany. Filled with this idea, and animated by that pure zeal for science, which is its own best reward, Schlegel resolves to betake him to the study of the Sanscrit tongue. But for the considerations I have ventured to suggest, such a resolution on the part of such a man would be surely calculated to excite regret. we should be inclined to lament that a mind so original, already saturated with so much elegant literature and solid learning, should be thus doomed in the bloom of its existence, to consume years in the toilsome acquisition of the most difficult of all languages.

In prosecution of his undertaking, Schlegel repaired in the year 1802, to Paris, which had been long celebrated for her professors in the Eastern tongues, and where the national library presented to the oriental scholar, inexhaustible stores of wealth. Here, with the able assistance of those distinguished orientalists, M. M. de Langlès and Chézy, Schlegel made considerable progress in the study of Persian and Sanscrit literature. But while engaged in these laborious pursuits, he contrives to find time to plunge into the then almost unexplored mines of Provençal poesy— to undertake profound researches into the history of the middle age, and to deliver lectures on Metaphysics in the French language. If these lectures did not meet with all the success which might have been hoped for, this cannot surprise us, when we consider that the gross materialism which had long weighed on the Parisian mind, and from which it was then but slowly emerging, could ill accord with the lofty Platonism of the German; nor when we add to the disadvantage under which every one labours when speaking in a foreign tongue, the fact that nature had not favoured this extraordinary man with a happy delivery. From Paris, he wrote a series of articles on the early Italian,

Spanish, Portuguese, and Provençal poetry. The article on Portuguese poetry is singularly beautiful, and contains, among other things, some remarks as new as they are just, on the influence of climate and locality in the formation of dialects. It comprises, too, an admirable critique on the noble poem of the Lusiad, which in allusion to the great national catastrophe that so soon followed on its publication, and by which the ancient power, energy, and glory of Portugal were for ever destroyed, he calls "the swan-like cry of a people of heroes prior to its downfall." This essay and others of the same period furnish also a proof how very soon Frederick Schlegel had framed his critical views and opinions on the various works of art. His æsthetic system seems to have been formed at a single cast—we might almost say, that from the head of this intellectual Jove, the Pallas of criticism had leaped all armed. His metaphysical theories, on the contrary, appear to have been slowly elaborated—to have undergone many modifications and improvements in the lapse of years, and never to have been moulded into a form of perfect symmetry, until the last years of his life.

During his abode in France, he addressed to a friend in Germany, a series of beautiful letters on the different schools and epochs of Christian painting. The pictorial treasures of a large part of Europe were then concentrated in the French capital; and Schlegel, availing himself of this golden opportunity, gave an account of the various master-pieces of modern art, contained in the public and private collections of Paris; interweaving in these notices, general views on the nature, object, and limits of Christian painting. These letters the author has since revised and enlarged; and they now form one of the most delightful volumes in the general collection of his works.

The three arts, sculpture, music, and painting,

correspond, according to the author, to the three parts of human consciousness, the body—the soul—and the mind. Sculpture, the most material of the fine arts, best represents the beauty of form, and the properties of sense: Music explores and gives utterance to the deepest feelings of the human soul: but it is reserved for the most spiritual of the arts—Painting, to express all the mysteries of intelligence—all the divine symbolism in nature and in man. He shows that the three arts have objects very distinct, and which must by no means be confounded. But the respective limits of these arts have not always been duly observed. Hence, confining his observation to painting, there are some artists, whom he calls sculpture-painters, like the great Angelo—others again musical painters, like Correggio and Murillo.

The various schools of art—the elder Italian—the later Italian—the Spanish—the old German—and the Flemish, pass successively under review. The distinctive qualities of the mighty masters in each school—the fantastic and truly Dantesque wildness of Giotto—the soft outline of Perugino—the depth of feeling that characterises Leonardo da Vinci—the ideal beauty—the various, the infinite charm of Raphael—the gigantic conception of Angelo—the glowing reality of Titian—the harmonious elegance of Correggio—the bold vigour of Julio Romano—the noble effort of the Caraccis to revive in a declining age the style of the great masters—the true Spanish earnestness and concentrated energy of Murillo—the deep-toned piety of Velasquez—the profound and comprehensive understanding which distinguishes his own Dürer, whom he calls the Shakspeare of painting—the distinctive qualities of these great masters, (to name but a few of the more eminent) are analysed with incomparable skill, and set forth with charming diction. I regret that the

limits of this introductory memoir will not allow me to give an analysis of these enchanting letters; but I cannot forbear observing in conclusion, that at the present moment, when there seems to be an earnest wish on all sides to revive the higher art among ourselves, whoever would undertake a translation of these letters, would, I think, confer a service on the public generally, and on our artists in particular. To the friends and followers of art, such a work is the more necessary, as the illustrious author has in a manner taken up the subject where Winkelmann had left off. These letters are followed by others equally admirable on Gothic architecture, where the characteristic qualities of the different epochs in the civil and ecclesiastical architecture of the middle age are set forth with the same masterly powers of fancy and discrimination. This sublime art seemed to respond best to Schlegel's inmost feelings.

But I am now approaching a passage in the life of Schlegel, which will be viewed in a different light according to the different feelings and convictions of my readers. By some his conduct will be considered a blameable apostacy from the faith of his fathers—by others, a generous sacrifice of early prejudices on the altar of truth. To disguise my own approbation of his conduct, would be to do violence to my feelings, and wrong to my principles; but to enter into a justification of his motives, would be to engage in a polemical discussion, most unseemly in an introduction to a work which is perfectly foreign to inquiries of that nature. I shall therefore confine myself to a brief statement of facts: noticing at the same time, the intellectual condition of the two great religious parties of Germany, immediately prior and subsequent to Schlegel's change of religion.

It was on his return from France in the year 1805, and in the ancient city of Cologne, that the subject of

this memoir was received into the bosom of the Catholic church. There—in that venerable city, which was so often honoured by the abode of the great founder of Christendom—Charlemagne—which abounds with so many monuments of the arts, the learning, the opulence and political greatness of the middle age—where the great Christian Aristotle of the thirteenth century —Aquinas—had passed the first years of his academic course—there, in that venerable minster, too, one of the proudest monuments of Gothic architecture—was solemnized in the person of this illustrious man, the alliance between the ancient faith and modern science of Germany—an alliance that has been productive of such important consequences, and is yet pregnant with mightier results.

The purity of the motives which directed Schlegel in this, the most important act of his life, few would be ignorant or shameless enough to impeach. His station — his character — his virtues — all suffice to repel the very suspicion of unworthy motives; and the least reflection will shew, that while in a country circumstanced like Germany, his change of religion could not procure for him greater honours and emoluments than under any circumstances, his genius would be certain to command; that change would too surely expose him to obloquy, misrepresentation, and calumny—and what to a heart so sensitive as his, must have been still more painful—the alienation, perhaps, of esteemed friends. Had he remained a Protestant, he would instead of engaging in the service of Austria, have in all probability taken to that of Prussia, and there doubtless have received the same honours and distinctions which have been so deservedly bestowed on his illustrious brother. We may suppose, also, that a man of his mind and character, would not on slight and frivolous grounds, have taken a step so important; nor in a matter so momentous, have come to a

decision, without a full and anxious investigation. In fact, his theological learning was extensive—he was well-read in the ancient fathers—the schoolmen of the middle age, and the more eminent modern divines; and though I am not aware that he has devoted any special treatise to theology, yet the remarks scattered through his works, whether on Biblical exegesis, or dogmatic divinity, are so pregnant, original and profound, that we plainly see it was in his power to have given to the world a "*systema theologicum*," no less masterly than that of his great predecessor—Leibnitz. The works of the early Greek fathers, indeed, he appears to have made a special object of scientific research, well knowing what golden grains of philosophy may be picked up in that sacred stream. The conversion of Schlegel was hailed with enthusiasm by the Catholics of Germany. This event occurred indeed, at a moment equally opportune to himself and to the Catholic body. To himself—for though his noble mind would never have run a-ground amid the miserable shallows of Rationalism, yet had it not then taken refuge in the secure haven of Catholicism, it might have been sucked down in the rapid eddies of Pantheism. To the Catholic body in Germany, this event was no less opportune; and for the reasons that shall now be stated.

Germany, which in the middle age had produced so many distinguished poets, artists, and philosophers, was, at the Reformation, shorn of much of her intellectual strength. In the disastrous thirty years' war, which that event brought about, she saw her universities robbed of their most distinguished ornaments, and the lights, which ought to have adorned her at home, shedding their lustre on foreign lands. The general languor and exhaustion of the German mind, consequent on that fearful and convulsive struggle, was apparent enough in the literature of the age,

which ensued after the treaty of Westphalia. To these causes, which produced this general declension of German intellect, must be added one which specially applies to the Catholic portion of Germany.

Every great abuse of human reason, by a natural revulsion of feeling, inspires a certain dread and distrust of its powers. This has been more than once exemplified in the history of the church. So, at this momentous period, some of the German Catholic powers sought in obscurantism, a refuge and security against religious and political innovations, and denied to science that encouragement which she had a right to look for at their hands:—a policy as infatuated as it is culpable, for, while ignorance draws down contempt and disgrace on religion, it begets in its turn, as a melancholy experience has proved, those very errors and that very unbelief, against which it was designed as a protection.

Had the court of Austria acceded to the proposal of Leibnitz for establishing at Vienna that academy of sciences which he afterwards succeeded in founding at Berlin, the glory of that great resuscitation of the German mind, which occurred in the middle of the eighteenth century, would have then probably redounded to Catholic, rather than to Protestant, Germany. But the German Catholics, though they started later in the career of intellectual improvement, have at length reached, and even outstripped, their Protestant brethren in the race.

Three or four years before Schlegel embraced the Catholic faith, the signal for a return to the ancient church was given by the illustrious Count Stolberg. The religious impulse, which this great man imparted to German literature, was simultaneous with that Christian regeneration of philosophy, commenced in France by the Viscount de Bonald. And these two illustrious men, in the noble career which

five and thirty years' ago they opened in their respective countries, have been followed by a series of gigantic intellects, who have restored the empire of faith, regenerated art and science, and renovated, if I may so speak, the human mind itself.*

Forty years' ago, the Catholics of Germany, as I said, were in a state of the most humiliating intellectual inferiority to their Protestant brethren — they could point to few writers of eminence in their own body—Protestantism was the lord of the ascendant in every department of German letters:—and yet so well have the Catholics employed the intervening time, they now furnish the most valuable portion of a literature, in many respects the most valuable in Europe. In every branch of knowledge, they can now shew writers of the highest order. To name but a few of the most distinguished, they have produced the two greatest Biblical critics of the age—Hug and Scholz—profound Biblical exegetists, like Alber, Ackermann, and, recently, Molitor, who has created a new era not only in Biblical literature, but in the Philosophy of History — divines, like Wiest, Dobmayer, Schwarz, Zimmer, Brenner, Liebermann, and Mochler, distinguished as they are for various and extensive learning, and understandings as comprehensive as they are acute—an ecclesiastical historian pre-eminent for genius, erudition, and celestial suavity, like Count Stolberg—philosophic archaiologists, like Hammer and Schlosser—admirable publicists, like Gentz, Adam Müller, and the Swiss Haller—and two philosophers, possessed of vast acquirements and colossal intellects, like Goerres, and the subject of this memoir. In Germany and elsewhere, Catholic

* The aristocracy of French literature, and a very splendid aristocracy it is, has been for the last twenty years decidedly Catholic. The enemies of the church are to be found almost exclusively in the bourgeoisie, and still more in the canaille, of that literature.

genius seems only to have slumbered during the eighteenth century, in order to astonish the world by a new and extraordinary display of strength. It is undoubtedly true that several of the above-named individuals originally belonged to the Protestant church —and that that church should have given birth to men of such exalted genius, refined sensibility, and moral worth, is a circumstance which furnishes our Protestant brethren with additional claims to our love and respect. We hail these first proselytes as the pledges of a more general, and surely not a very distant, re-union.

The vigorous graft of talent, which the Catholic thus received from the Protestant community, was imparted to a stock, where the powers of vegetation, long dormant, began now to revive with renovated strength. The old Catholics zealously co-operated with the new in the regeneration of all the sciences—and the effects of their joint labours have been apparent, not only in the transcendent excellence of individual productions, but in the new life and energy infused into the learned corporations—the universities as well as the institutes of science. The mixed universities, like those of Bonn, Freyburg, and others, are in a great degree supported by Catholic talent; and the great Catholic University of Munich, which the present excellent King of Bavaria founded in 1826, already by the celebrity of its professors, the number of its scholars, and the admirable direction of the studies, bids fair to rival the most celebrated Universities in Germany.*

* The words which the King of Bavaria used at the moment of founding this University, are remarkable. "I do not wish," said he, "that my subjects should be learned at the cost of religion, nor religious at the cost of learning."—See Baader's opening speech in 1826. *Philosophische Schriften*, page 366. These are golden words, which ought to be engraven on the hearts of all princes. In other words,

Gratifying as it must have been to Schlegel to see by how many distinguished spirits his example had been followed, and to witness the rapid literary improvement of that community in Germany to which he had now united himself, he could not expect to escape those crosses and contradictions which are, in this world, the heritage of the just. The rancorous invectives which the fanatic Rationalist—Voss, had never ceased to pour out on his own early friend and benefactor—the heavenly-minded Stolberg, excited the contempt and disgust of every well-constituted mind in the Protestant community. This Cerberus of Rationalism opened his deep-mouthed cry on Schlegel also, as he set his foot on the threshold of the Catholic church. In this instance, the religious bigotry of Voss was inflamed and exasperated by literary jealousy. By his criticisms, and masterly translation of Homer and other Greek poets, this highly gifted man had not only rendered imperishable service to German literature, but had contributed to infuse a new life into the study of classical antiquity. Jealous, therefore of his Greeks, whom he worshipped with a sort of exclusive idolatry, he looked with distrust and aversion on every attempt to introduce the orientals to the literary notice of the Germans. He ran down Asiatic literature of every age and nation with the most indiscriminate and unsparing violence—denounced the intentions of its

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the monarch meant to say, I wish to consecrate science by religion, and I wish to confirm and extend religion by science. This sovereign is the most enlightened, as well as munificent, patron of learning in Europe; and whether we consider his zeal in the cause of religion—his solicitude for the freedom and prosperity of his subjects—his profound knowledge, as well as active patronage, of art and science—and his true-hearted German frankness and probity; he is, in every respect, a worthy namesake of the illustrious Emperor Maximilian. He has assisted in making his capital a true German Athens; and, small as it is, it may at this moment compete in art, literature, and science, with the proudest cities in Europe.

admirers as evil and sinister; and, in allusion to the noble use which Stolberg, Schlegel, and others had made of their oriental learning in support of Christianity, petulantly exclaimed on one occasion, "The Brahmins have leagued with the Jesuits, in order to subvert the Protestant, or (as we should translate that word in this country) the Rationalist religion."

It was in 1808, after several years spent in the study of Sanscrit literature, Schlegel published the result of his researches and meditations in the celebrated work entitled the "Language and Wisdom of the Indians." This work, the first part of which is occupied with a comparative examination of the etymology and grammatical structure of the Sanscrit, Persian, Greek, Roman, and German languages, the second whereof traces the filiation and connection of the different religious and philosophical systems that have prevailed in the ancient oriental world, and the last of which consists of metrical versions from the sacred and didactic poems of the Hindoos—this work, I say, might not be inaptly termed a grammar, syntax, and prosody of philosophy.

With respect to etymology, Schlegel points out the number of Sanscrit words identical in sound and signification with words in the Persian, or the Greek, or the Latin, or the German, or sometimes even in all those languages put together. He excludes words which are imitations of natural sounds, and which therefore might have been adopted simultaneously by nations unknown to each other; and selects those words only which are of the most simple and primitive signification, such as relate to those intellectual and physical objects most closely allied to man; as also auxiliary verbs, pronouns, nouns of number, and prepositions:—words which are less exposed than any to those casual and partial changes which conquest,

commerce, and religion, introduce into language. With respect to grammatical structure, the author shows that the mode of declining nouns, and conjugating verbs, of forming the degrees of comparison in adjectives, of marking the gender and number of substantives, of changing or modifying the signification of words by prefixed particles, is common to the Sanscrit, and the other derivative languages above-mentioned. It is from this strong external and internal resemblance, these languages have received the appellation of the Indo-Germanic. The prior antiquity of the Sanscrit the author infers from the greater length and fulness of its words, and the richness and refinement of its grammatical forms; for, to use his own expression, "words, like coin, are clipped by use, and the languages, where abbreviation prevails, are ever the most recent."

The prescient genius of Leibnitz had foretold a century and a half ago, that the study of languages would be found one day to throw a great light on history. No one better realized this prediction than Schlegel. In the first part of this work, he has proved, by his own example, that language is not a mere instrument of knowledge, but a science in itself; and when I consider the noble use he has made of his Sanscrit learning; when I contemplate all the great and brilliant results of his oriental researches, I must recal the sort of regret I expressed a few pages above. While in the course of the last fifty years, a number of distinguished naturalists have carried the torch of science into the dark caverns of the earth, traced by its light the physical revolutions of our globe, and discovered the remains of an extinct world of nature; many illustrious philologists have at the same time explored the inmost recesses of language, and, by their profound researches, brought to light the fossil remains of early history, discovered the migrations of

nations and the changes of empire, and regained the lost traces of portions of our species. This remarkable parallelism in the moral and physical inquiries of the age will be considered fortuitous by those only, who have not watched the luminous course of that loving Providence, whose hand is equally visible in the progress of science, as in every other department of human activity.

But on no branch of historical knowledge have the recent philological researches thrown more light than on mythology—a science which the present age may be said to have created. While illustrious defenders of the Christian religion—a Count Stolberg* in Germany, and still more, an abbé de la Mennais† in France, treading in the footsteps of the ancient fathers, and of the abler modern apologists, like Grotius, Huet and others, have victoriously proved the existence of a primeval revelation, the diffusion and perpetuity of its doctrines among all the nations of the world, civilized and barbarous—the compatibility of a belief in the unity of the God-head with the crime of idolatry, ranked by the apostle, "among the works of the flesh,"—the local nature and object of the Mosaic law, destined by the Almighty for the special use of a people charged with maintaining, in its purity, that worship of Jehovah mostly abandoned or neglected by the nations, who "though they knew God, did not glorify him as God"—and favoured also with the promises of "the good things to come," intrusted with the prophetic records of the life and ministry of that Messiah, of whose future coming the Gentiles had only a vague and obscure anticipation:—while

* Geschichte der Religion.—1804-11.

† Essai sur l'indifference en matiere de religion: 4 vols. 8vo. Paris, 1823;—a work where learning, eloquence, and philosophy have laid their richest offerings at the shrine of Christianity.

these illustrious defenders of religion, I say, were proving the agreement of all the Heathen nations in the great dogmas of the primitive revelation; another class of inquirers (and among these was Schlegel) laboured to shew the points of divergence in the different systems of Heathenism, studied the peculiar genius of each, and traced the influence which climate, circumstance, and national character have exerted over all. The object of the former was to point out the general threads of primeval truth in the fabric of Paganism—that of the latter to trace the later and fanciful intertexture of superstition. For in that fantastic web, which we call mythology, truth and fiction, poetry and history, physics and philosophy, are all curiously interwoven. Hence the arduous nature of these researches—hence the difficulties and perils which await the investigator at almost every step.

Of the second part of this work on India, which treats of the religious and philosophical systems of the early Asiatic nations, it is the less necessary here to speak, as the reader will find the subject amply discussed in the course of the following sheets. It may be proper, however, to observe that the different philosophic errors mentioned by Schlegel, as prevalent in the ancient Asiatic world, may all be resolved to two systems—Dualism and Pantheism—the two earliest heresies in the history of religion—the two gulfs, into which dark, but presumptuous, reason fell, when, rejecting the light of revelation, she attempted to explain those unfathomable mysteries—the origin of evil on the one hand, and the co-existence of the finite and the infinite on the other.

On the whole, the "Wisdom of the Indians" is an admirable little book, whether we consider the profound and extensive philological knowledge it displays—the rich variety of historical perceptions it discloses—the

clearness of its arrangement, and the elegant simplicity of the style. In the seven and twenty years which have elapsed since this production saw the light, the subjects discussed in it have undergone ample investigation—many of its observations have passed into the current coin of the learned world—truths which it vaguely surmised, have since been fully established—and the knowledge of Indian literature and philosophy has been vastly extended; yet this is one of those works which will be always read with a lively interest. It is thus that, in despite of the progress of classical philology, the writings of the great critical restorers of ancient literature have, after the lapse of three centuries, retained their place in public estimation. It is pleasing to watch the stream of learning in its various meanderings—to trace it as it winds through a broader, but not always a deeper, channel, sullied and disturbed not unfrequently by accidental pollutions—it is pleasing to trace it to its source, where, from underneath the rock, it wells out in all its limpid purity. Prior to the publication of this work, the Semitic languages of the East were alone, I believe, cultivated with much ardour in Germany; its appearance had the effect of directing the national energies towards an intellectual region, where they were destined to meet with the most brilliant success; and, if Germany may now boast with reason of her illustrious professors of Sanscrit; if France, under the Restoration made such rapid progress in oriental literature; if England, roused from her inglorious apathy, has at last founded an Asiatic society in London, and more recently, the Boden professorship at Oxford—these events are, in a great degree, attributable to the enthusiasm which this little book excited.

In the year 1810, Schlegel delivered, at Vienna, a course of lectures on "Modern History." This book, which was in two volumes, 8vo., has long been out of

print; and the volumes destined to contain it in the general collection of the author's works, have not yet been published. Hence no account of it can be here given—a circumstance which I the more regret, as, in the opinion of some, it is Schlegel's masterpiece. It embodied in a sytematic form the views and opinions contained in a variety of the author's earlier historical essays, which are also out of print, and have not yet been republished. In it, I know, are to be found the detailed proofs and evidences of many positions advanced in the second volume of the work, to which this Memoir is prefixed.

We should, however, form a very inadequate estimate of the services this great writer has rendered to literature, and of the influence he has exerted on his age, were we to confine our attention solely to his larger works. Throughout his whole life, he was an assiduous contributor to periodical literature—a species of writing which, in the present age, has been cultivated with signal success in England, France and Germany. At the commencement of the present century, he edited in conjunction with Tieck, Novalis and his brother, a literary journal, entitled the Athenæum; and afterwards successively conducted polical and philosophical journals, such as the "Europa," —the "German Museum,"—and lastly the "Concordia;" giving latterly, also, his zealous support to the Vienna Quarterly Review. Some of his earlier critiques have already been noticed. Among the shorter literary essays, which appeared in the twelve years that elapsed from 1800 to 1812, I may notice the one entitled "the Epochs of Literature," 1800; and which may be considered the first rude outline of those immortal lectures on the "History of Literature," which he delivered in 1812. Often as he has occasion to treat the same subject, yet such is the inexhaustible wealth of his intellect, he seldom tires by repetition.

Thus his minutest fragments, like the sketches of Raphael, are full of interest and variety. Another essay of the same year, "on the different style in Goethe's earlier and later works," shews with what a discriminating eye the young critic had already scanned all the heights and the depths of this wonderful poet. Of this great writer, the moral direction of some of whose writings he reprobated in the strongest degree, he did not hesitate to say that, like Dante in the middle age, he was the founder of a new order of poetry—that he had been the first to restore the art to the elevation from which, since the commencement of the seventeenth century, it had sunk—that he united the amenity of Homer — the ideal beauty of Sophocles—and the wit of Aristophanes. The opinion which in youth he had formed of the great national poet of Germany, his maturer experience fully confirmed. Eight years afterwards he published a long and elaborate critique on Goethe's lays, songs, elegies, and miscellaneous poems. Pre-eminently great as Goethe is in every branch of poetry, in songs he is allowed to stand perfectly unrivalled. "From the shores of the Baltic to the frontiers of Alsace," says the Baron d'Eckstein, "the lyric poetry of Goethe lives in the hearts and on the lips of an enthusiastic people." In this reviewal we find, among other things, a learned and ingenious dissertation on the various species of lyric poetry — the lay, the romance, the ballad, and the occasional poem; on the nature, object, and limits of each—their points of resemblance, and points of difference, together with observations on the fitness of certain metres for certain kinds of poetry.

From his youth upwards, Schlegel was in the habit of seeking, in the delightful worship of the muse, a solace and relaxation from his severer and more laborious pursuits. Without making pretensions to anything of a very high order his poetry is

remarkable for a chaste, classical diction, great harmony and flexibility of versification, a sweet elegance of fancy, and, at times, depth and tenderness of feeling. Friendship, patriotism and piety are the noble themes to which he consecrates his strains. What spirit and fire in his lines on Mohammed's flight from Mecca! What a noble burst of nationality in his address to the Rhine! How touching the verses to the memory of his much-loved friend, Novalis—that sweet flower of poesy and philosophy, cut off in its early bloom! In the lines to Corinna, what lofty consolations are administered to that illustrious woman, under the persecutions she had to sustain from the Imperial despotism of France! And in the sonnet entitled "Peace," 1806, what lessons of exalted wisdom are given to the men of our time!

The longer poem, entitled "Hercules Musagetes," is among the most admired of the author's pieces. His original poems equal in number, though not in excellence, those of his brother; for it would be absurd to expect that this universal genius should shine equally in every department of letters. The flexible, graceful, harmonious genius of Augustus William Schlegel has at different periods enriched his own tongue with the noblest literary treasures of ancient and modern Italy, of Portugal, Spain and England; and his immortal translations, which have superior merit to any original poems, but those of the highest order, are admitted by competent judges to have done more than the works of any writer, except Goethe, for improving the rhythm and poetical diction of his country. The great poetical powers which his short original pieces, as well as his translations, display, make it a matter of regret that he should have so much confined himself to translation, and never ventured on the composition of a great poem.

Both these incomparable brothers are minds emi-

nently poetical, and eminently philosophical. In one the poetic element prevails—in the other, the philosophical element, and, by a great deal, predominates. In their early productions we can scarcely discriminate the features of these apparently intellectual twins: but, as their genius ripens to manhood, the one becomes an etherial Apollo, full of grace, energy, and majesty—the other an intellectual Hercules, of the most gigantic strength and colossal stature.

In was in the Spring of 1812 that Schlegel delivered, before a numerous and distinguished audience at Vienna, his lectures on ancient and modern literature. Of this work, which a German critic has characterised "as a great national possession of the Germans," and which has been translated into several European languages, and is so well known to the English reader by the excellent translation which appeared in 1818, it is unnecessary to speak at much length. Here were concentrated in one focus all those radii of criticism that this powerful mind had so long emitted. Here, at the bidding of a potent magician, the lords of intellect — the mighty princes of literature of all times—

> "The dead, yet sceptred, sovereigns, who still rule
> Our spirits from their urns"—

pass before our eyes in stately procession—each with his distinct physiognomy — his native port — and all clothed with a fresh immortality. Literature is considered not merely in reference to art—but in relation to the influence it has exerted on the destinies of mankind, and to the various modifications which the religion, the government, the laws, the manners, and habits of different nations have caused it to undergo. The first quality that must strike us in this work is the admirable arrangement which has formed so many and such various materials into one harmonious whole.

By what an easy and natural transition does the author pass from the Greek to the Roman literature! With what admirable skill he passes, in the age of Hadrian, from the old Roman to the oriental literature, and from the latter back again to the Christian literature of the middle age! How skilfully he has interwoven, in this sketch of oriental letters, the notices of the ancients and the researches of the moderns on the East! The next characteristic of this work is gigantic learning. To that intimate familiarity with the poets, historians, orators and philosophers of classical antiquity which his earlier writings had displayed—to the profound knowledge of oriental, and especially Sanscrit, literature evinced in the above-noticed work on India; we now see added a knowledge of the long buried treasures of the old German and Provençal poetry of the middle age—the scholastic philosophy—the principal modern European literatures in their several periods of bloom, maturity and decay. What a strong light, also, is thrown on some dark passages in the history of philosophy! Where shall we find a more curious, graphic, and interesting account of the mystics of the middle age, and of the German and Italian Platonists of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries! Every page bears the stamp of long and diligent inquiry, and original investigation. The minute traits—the accurate drawing—the freshness and vividness of colouring—the truth and life-like reality in this whole picture of literature, prove that the artist drew from the original, and not a copy. No better proof can be adduced of the *accuracy*, as well as extent of learning which distinguished this illustrious man and his brother, than the fact that their different works on classical, oriental and modern literature have received the approbation of such scholars, as made those several branches of knowledge the special objects of their study and inquiry. Thus their labours

on Greek and Roman poetry met with the high sanction of a Heyne, a Wolf, and other distinguished Hellenists—their works on Sanscrit literature have been commended by a Guignault—a Remusat—a Chezy, and our own academicians of Calcutta; and their critiques on Shakspeare and the early English poets have been approved by the national critics, and especially by one who had devoted many years to the study of our elder poetry—I mean that able critic and accomplished scholar—the late Mr. Gifford.

The other and more important characteristics of this work are delicacy of taste, solidity of judgment, vigour and boldness of fancy, and depth and comprehensiveness of understanding. Here we see united, though in a more eminent degree, the acuteness, sagacity, and erudition of Lessing—the high artist-like enthusiasm of Winkelmann—and that exquisite sense of the beautiful, that vigorous, flexible and excursive fancy which made the genius of Herder at home in every region of art, and in every clime of poesy. The intellectual productions of every age and country—the primitive oriental world—classical antiquity—the middle age—and modern times, pass under review, and receive the same impartial attention—the same just appreciation—the same masterly characterization. In a work so full of beauties, it is difficult to make selections—but, were I called upon to point out specimens of succinct criticism, which, for justness and delicacy of discrimination—a poetic soaring of conception—and depth of observation, are unsurpassed, perhaps, in the whole range of literature, I should name the several critiques on Homer—Lucretius—Dante—Calderon—and Cervantes. The part least well done is that which treats of the literature of the last two centuries; but, from the vast multiplicity of details, it was impossible for the author, within his narrow limits, to do full justice to this part of his

subject. He has not paid due homage to several of the great writers that adorned the reign of Louis XIV. He drops but one word on Pascal, and passes Mallébranche over in silence; though if ever there were writers deserving the notice of the historian of literature and philosophy, it was surely those two eminent men. In general, Schlegel was too fond of crowding his figures within a narrow canvass—hence many of them could not be placed in a suitable light or position; and several of his heads appear but half-sketched. This is not a mere book of criticism—it is a philosophical work in the widest sense of the word—the genius of the author is ever soaring above his subject—ever springing from the lower world of art, to those high and aerial regions of philosophy still more native to his spirit. To him the beautiful was only the symbol of the divine—hence the tone of earnestness and solemnity which he carries even into æsthetic dissertations. The style too, of this "history of literature" leaves little to be desired. To the lightness, clearness, and elegance of diction which had distinguished Schlegel's earlier productions, was here united a greater richness and copiousness of expression, and a more harmonious fulness and roundness of period. From this time, however, (if an Englishman may presume to offer an opinion on such a subject,) a decline may, I think, be observed in his style. His mind, indeed, seemed to gain strength and expansion with the advance of years—the horizon of his views was perpetually enlarged—and in vastness of conception, and profundity of observation, his last philosophical works outshine even those of his early manhood. Yet to whatever cause we are to attribute the fact—whether it be that his last works had not received from his hands the same careful revisal—or whether some men as they advance in life, become as negligent in their style as in their dress—or whether he at last

gave in to the bad practice so prevalent in Germany, of disregarding the lighter graces of diction—certain it is, that his later writings, much as they may have gained in excellence of matter, and presenting, as they do, passages perhaps of superior power and splendour, are on the whole no longer characterised by the same uniform terseness and perspicuity of language.

With the "History of ancient and modern literature," Schlegel closed his critical career. He never afterwards mounted the tribunal of criticism, except on one occasion, when he awarded in favour of the early poetical effusions of M. de la Martine, a solemn sentence of approbation.* He now devoted himself with exclusive ardour to the graver concerns of politics and philosophy. Nor can we regret this resolution on his part, when we reflect that as far as regards literature, he had done all that was necessary—that he had now only to leave to time to work out his æsthetic principles in the German mind—and that

* In the beautiful critique inserted in the Concordia on M. de la Martine's "Meditations poetiques," (1820) Schlegel observes that Lord Byron was the representative of a by-gone poesy, and La Martine the herald of a new Christian poetry that was to come. Comparing the three greatest contemporary poets out of his own country, Scott, Byron, and La Martine, Schlegel saw in the productions of the first, the poetry of a vague reminiscence—in those of the second, the poetry of despair; and in those of the last, the commencement of a poetry of hope.* Much as he reprobated the anti-christian spirit and tendency of Lord Byron's muse, and much as he rejoiced that its pernicious influence was in some degree counteracted by the noble effusions of the French rhapsodist, he still rendered full justice to the great genius of the British bard. He calls him in one of his last works, "the wonderful English poet—perhaps the greatest—certainly the most remarkable poet of our times:"†—an encomium which Byron's admirers may learn to appreciate, when they remember who his contemporaries were, and who the critic was, that pronounced this judgment.

* See his History of Literature, vol. 2. New edition in German.

† Philosophie des Lebens, page 21.

should further elucidation on these topics be required, the distinguished Tieck, and his illustrious brother were at hand to furnish the requisite aid. But in metaphysics and political philosophy, what German could supply his place?

In the four eventful years which elapsed from 1808 to 1812, occupations as new to Schlegel as they were important and various in themselves, filled up the active life of this extraordinary man. In the Austrian campaign of 1809, he was employed as secretary to the Archduke Charles; and it is said that his eloquent proclamations had considerable effect in kindling the patriotism of the Austrian people. It was about the same time, he founded a daily paper, called "the Austrian Observer," which has since become the official organ of the Austrian government. The establishment of this journal—the situation which Schlegel had previously held at the head-quarters of the Archduke Charles — the diplomatic missions in which after the peace of 1814, he was employed by Prince Metternich who, be it said to the glory of that illustrious statesman, ever honoured him with his friendship and patronage—and finally the pension, letters of nobility, and office of Aulic Councillor, which the emperor was pleased to confer on him, may induce some of my readers to suppose that his political views were identified with those of the government, in whose service he was occasionally engaged; and that he was an unqualified admirer of the whole foreign and domestic policy of Austria. No conception can be more erroneous. As Secretary to the Archduke Charles, he knew he lent his support to a government which had shown itself the most honest, vigilant, and powerful friend of German independence —he knew he fought the battle of his country against an unholy and execrable tyranny, which, whatever shape it might assume—whether that of a lawless de-

mocracy or a ruthless despotism—was alike inimical to Christianity—alike fatal to the peace, the happiness, and the liberties of every country it subdued. In the next place, it is not usual even in the representative system, still less under a government constituted like that of Austria, to exact a perfect conformity of political sentiments between diplomatic agents and the heads of administration. Again the pension, title, and dignity which Schlegel received at the hands of the Emperor of Austria, were the well-earned recompence of distinguished services, and not the badges of servility. Lastly with respect to the "Austrian Observer," his motive in establishing that journal was purely patriotic. To enkindle the warlike enthusiasm of the Austrian people—to unite the weakened, divided, and distracted states of Germany in a common league against a common foe—to procure for his country the first of all political blessings—that without which all others are valueless—national independence; such was his object in this undertaking—such the object of every sincere and reflecting patriot of Germany at that period. The leaning towards a stationary absolutism, which has marked this journal since Schlegel gave up the conduct of it, belongs to its present editors; but that tone of dignified moderation, which according to the express acknowledgment of German Liberals, it carries into the discussion of political matters—that aversion from all extreme and violent parties and measures in politics, which distinguishes this journal, betray the illustrious hand which first set it in motion.

Nothing, in fact, can be more dissimilar than the policy long followed by the Austrian government, and that which Schlegel would have recommended, and did in fact recommend. What, especially since the time of the Emperor Joseph II., has characterized the general policy of this government? In respect to

ecclesiastical matters, we still see (though the evil was mitigated by the piety of the late emperor), we still see that government, by a restless, encroaching spirit of jealousy, hamper the jurisdiction, and cramp the moral and intellectual energies of the clergy. In relation to the people, its sway is mild and paternal, indeed, but at the same time, intrusive, meddling and vexatious—it is, in short, a dead, mechanical absolutism, where all spontaneity of popular action has been destroyed—all equilibrium of powers overturned—and where royalty, by an irregular attraction, has disturbed, deranged, or compressed the movements of the other social bodies. With respect to science, those best acquainted with the policy of this government affirm, that its patronage is too exclusively confined to the mechanical arts and the physical sciences. In short, no where has the political materialism of the eighteenth century attained a more systematic development than in the Austrian government. Yet in that empire are to be found all the elements of a great social regeneration; and to a minister desirous of earning enduring fame, to a monarch ambitious of living for ever in the hearts of a grateful people, the noblest opportunity is presented for reviving, renovating, and bringing to perfection the free, glorious, but now alas! mutilated and half-effaced institutions of the middle age.

If such is the policy of the Austrian government in relation to the church, to liberty, and to science, it is needless to observe how entirely opposed it was to the views of Schlegel. His whole life was devoted to the cultivation and diffusion of elegant literature and liberal science; and any policy which tended to obstruct their progress, or shackle the energies of the human mind, must have been most adverse to his feelings and wishes. As a sincere friend to religious liberty, as well as a good Catholic, he must have deplored the bondage under which the church groaned;

and how ardently attached he was to the cause of popular freedom, how utterly averse from any thing like absolutism in politics, the reader will soon have an opportunity of judging for himself.

But before I quit this subject, I cannot forbear noticing the very exaggerated statements sometimes put forth by party spirit in England, respecting the state of learning in the Austrian empire. Without pretending to any personal knowledge of that country, there are however a certain number of admitted and well-attested facts, which prove that however inferior in mental cultivation Austria may be to some other states of Catholic as well as Protestant Germany, she yet holds a distinguished place in literature and science. The very general diffusion of popular education in that country—the great success with which all the arts and sciences connected with industry are cultivated—the admirable organization of its medical board—the distinguished physicians, theoretical as well as practical, whom it has produced—the great attention bestowed on strategy and the sciences subservient to it—the excellence to which the histrionic art has there attained—the universal passion for music, and the unrivalled degree of perfection the art has there reached—the acknowledged superiority of the Quarterly Review of Vienna, (the Wiener Jahrbücher)—lastly, the favour, countenance, and encouragement extended by the Austrian public to the oral lectures and published writings of the eminent literary characters, whether natives or foreigners, who for the last thirty years have thrown such a glory over their capital—all these incontrovertible facts, I say, prove this people to have reached an advanced stage of intellectual refinement. So far from finding among the Viennese that Bæotian dulness of which we sometimes hear them accused, Augustus William Schlegel (and his testimony is impartial, for he is neither a native

nor resident of Austria,) confesses* that he discovered in them great aptness of intelligence, a keen relish for the beauties of poetry, and much of the vivacity of the Southern temperament. And the crowded audiences which flocked to the philosophical lectures Frederick Schlegel delivered on various occasions at Vienna, a metaphysician of equal celebrity might in vain look for in another European capital I could name, and which certainly considers itself very enlightened. There is no doubt that this Archduchy of Austria, which in the middle age produced some of the most celebrated Minnesingers, would with free institutions and a more generous policy on the part of the government, soon attain that intellectual station, to which its political greatness, and recent as well as ancient military glory alike bid it to aspire. If the statesmen that rule the destinies of that country were to regard the matter merely in a political point of view, they might see what moral dignity, weight and importance, the patronage of letters has given to the Protestant King of Prussia on the one hand, and to the Catholic King of Bavaria on the other.

For several years after the peace of 1814, Schlegel was one of the representatives of the Court of Vienna at the diet of Frankfort. These diplomatic functions occasioned a temporary interruption to his literary pursuits—an interruption which will be regretted by those only who have not reflected on the advantages of active life to the man of letters. The high dignity with which he was now invested—the commanding view which his station gave him of European politics—the insight he was enabled to obtain into the political state and relations of Germany—as well as the society and conversation of some of the most illus-

* See the Preface to the Lectures on Dramatic Literature, in the French translation.

trious statesmen of the age, were all of inestimable service to the Publicist; and by making him acquainted with the excellencies as well as defects of existing governments, the obstacles which retard the progress of improvement, the ill success which sometimes attends even well-considered measures of Reform, were calculated to check the rashness of speculation, inspire sobriety of judgment, and at the same time enlarge his views of political philosophy. In the year 1818, he returned to Vienna, and resumed his literary occupations with renewed ardour. He wrote the following year in the Vienna Quarterly Review, (the Wiener Jahrbücher,) a long and elaborate reviewal of M. Rhode's work on primitive history. This reviewal, which from its length may fairly be called a treatise, contains a clear, succinct, and masterly exposition of those views on the early history of mankind, which he has on some points more fully developed in the work, of which a translation is now given. This article, which alternately delights and astonishes us by the historical learning, the philological skill, the curious geographical lore, and the bold, profound and original philosophy it displays, may be considered one of the most admirable commentaries ever written on the first eleven chapters of the book of Genesis; and in none of his shorter essays has the genius of the illustrious writer shone more pre-eminently than this.*

The year 1820 was marked by the simultaneous outbreak of several revolutions in different countries of Europe, and by symptoms of general discontent, distrust, and agitation in other parts. The violent, though transitory volcanic eruptions which convulsed and desolated the south of Europe, scattered sparkles and ashes on the already burning soil of France, and shook on her rocky bed even the ocean-queen. In Germany the wild revolutionary enthusiasm which

* See Sämmtliche werke. vol. x. p. 267.

pervaded a large portion of the youth—the frenzied joy with which the assassination of Kotzbue had been hailed—the wide spread of associations fatal to the peace and freedom of mankind, and the pernicious anti-social doctrines proclaimed in many writings, and even from some professorial chairs, led the different governments to measures of severe scrutiny and jealous vigilance, likely by a re-action to prove dangerous to the cause of liberty. The causes of these various social phenomena it is not my business here to point out; but I may observe in passing, that these discontents—these struggles — these revolutions had their origin partly in natural causes, partly in the errors both of governments and nations. The general disjointing of all interests—the derangement in the concerns of all classes of society produced by the transition from a state of long protracted warfare to a state of general peace — the blunders committed by the Congress of Vienna in the settlement of Europe—the blind recurrence in some European states to the thoroughly worn-out absolutism of the eighteenth century, injurious as that political system had proved to religion, to social order, and to national prosperity—in other countries, a rash imitation of the mere outward forms of the British constitution, without any true knowledge of its internal organism—above all, the deadly legacy of anti-christian doctrines, and anti-social principles, which the last age had bequeathed to the present—such, independently of minor and more local reasons, are the principal causes, to which, I think, the impartial voice of history will ascribe the political commotions of that period. It was now evident that the great work of European Restoration had been but half-accomplished; and that the malignant Typhon of revolution was collecting his scattered members, recruiting his exhausted energies, and preparing anew to assault, oppress, and desolate the world.

Alarmed at the political aspect of Germany and Europe, Schlegel deemed the moment had arrived, when every friend of religion and social order should be found at his post. The importance of the struggle — the violence of parties — the false line of policy adopted by most governments — the errors and delusions too prevalent even among many of the defenders of legitimacy, rendered the warning voice of an enlightened mediator more necessary than ever. In conjunction with his illustrious friend, Adam Müller, and some of the Redemptorists—a most able, amiable, and exemplary body of ecclesiastics at Vienna — he established in 1820, a religious and political journal, entitled "Concordia." In a series of articles, entitled "Characteristics of the age," and which contain a most masterly sketch of the political state and prospects of the principal European countries, Schlegel has given a fuller exposition of his political principles, than in any other of his writings which have come under my notice. The extreme interest and importance of the matters discussed in these articles, and still more, the light they throw on very many passages in the following translation, have induced me to lay before the reader a rapid analysis of such parts as embody the author's political system. I shall therefore now proceed to this task, premising that in this analysis I shall occasionally interweave a remark of my own, to illustrate the author's views.—

There are five essential and eternal corporations in human society—the family—the church—the state —the guild—and the school.

I. The family is the smallest and simplest corporation—the ground-work of all the others;—and on its right constitution and moral development depend, as we shall presently see, the freedom, prosperity, and enlightenment of the state, the guild, and the school.

II. With respect to the church, its constitution

under the primitive revelation was purely domestic; religious instruction and the solemnization of religious offices, being intrusted to the heads of families and tribes. In the Mosaic law, the Almighty founded a *public* ministry in the synagogue, which was an admirable type of the future constitution of the Christian church. Unlike the local and temporary synagogue, the Christian church is perpetual and universal —but like the synagogue, it hath a public ministry. "This church, to use Schlegel's own words, is that great and divine corporation which embraces all other social relations, protects them under its vault, crowns them with dignity, and lovingly imparts to them the power of a peculiar consecration. The church is not a mere substitute formed to supply or repair the deficiencies of the other social institutes and corporations; but is itself a free, peculiar, independent, corporation, pervading all States, and in its object exalted far above them—an union and society with God, from whom it immediately derives its sustaining power."*

III. Between these two corporations the family—that deep, solid foundation of the social edifice below —and the church, that high, expansive and illumined vault above—stands the state. Schlegel defines the state, "a corporation armed for the maintenance of peace." Its existence, says he, is bound up with all the other corporations; it lives and moves in them; they are its natural organs; and as soon as the state, whether with despotic or anarchical views, attempts to impede the natural functions of these organs, to disturb or derange their peculiar sphere of action, it impairs its own vital powers, and prepares the way sooner or later for its own destruction."

IV. There are two intermediate corporations—the

* Concordia, page 59.

guild, which stands between the family and the state; and the school, which stands between the church and the state. By the guild, Schlegel understands "every species of traffic, industry and commerce, bound together in every part of the world by the common tie of money." The object of this corporation is the advancement of the material interests of the family; interests which it is the bounden duty of the state to protect and promote.

V. By the school, the author signifies the "whole intellectual culture of mankind — not merely the existing republic of letters, but all the tradition of science from the remotest ages to the present times." This corporation, I should say, has for its object the glorification of the church, the utility of the state, and the intellectual activity of the family, or rather its individual members.

But among these primary corporations, it is the state which forms the immediate object of the author's inquiries. I shall now proceed to lay before the reader the several characteristics which, according to the author, distinguish the Christian state, or the state animated with the spirit of Christianity.

§§ I. *The Christian state is without slaves, and honours the sanctity of the nuptial tie.*

Christianity first mitigated, and then abolished slavery. Slavery is incompatible with the spirit of Christianity, not only on account of the maltreatment, injuries, and oppression to which it subjects men; not only on account of the dangers to which it exposes female virtue; but chiefly and especially, because the state of slavery is one inconsistent with the dignity of a being made after the likeness of God. This complete emancipation of the lower classes from the bonds of servitude pre-eminently distinguishes the modern Christian states from those of classical

antiquity on the one hand, and those of the primitive oriental world on the other. In the former, domestic and predial slavery were carried to the last degree of harshness and severity — in the latter, especially in India, a totally different form of servitude existed. There the innocent descendants of those who had been guilty of certain crimes, or who had contracted unlawful marriages, were doomed to a state of irremediable oppression, debarred from all civil rights, and excluded from the very charities of life. The fate of these hapless beings was even harder than that of the slaves among the ancient Greeks and Romans. As the exclusion of a whole class from the rights of citizenship and the offices of religion is incompatible with the principles of Christian love; so the hereditary transmission of the sacerdotal dignity is inconsistent with the Christian doctrine, which inculcates the necessity of a divine call to the priesthood. Hence the incompatibility which exists between the system of castes and the Christian religion.

The author shows that the various species of vassalage are clearly distinguishable from slavery; yet that even these have yielded to the benign spirit of Christianity. The existence of slavery in the Christian colonies no wise militates against the principle here laid down; for the slave-trade has ever been condemned by all Christian nations as wicked and unjust; and slavery, the introduction of which into the colonies the church had so strenuously opposed, was afterwards tolerated by her only as a necessary evil. For, as Schlegel observes with his characteristic wisdom, "the sudden abolition of an evil that has become an inveterate habit in society, is mostly attended with danger, and frequently works another wrong of an opposite kind."* But this is one of those

* Concordia, page 363.

truths, which the giddy, reckless spirit of a spurious philanthropy can never be made to comprehend.

As the Christian state abhors slavery from its inconsistency with the dignity of man, so, for the same reason, it guards with jealous vigilance, the sanctity and inviolability of the nuptial tie. Polygamy degrades woman from her natural rank in society—destroys the happiness of private life — poisons the very well-springs of education—and connected as it too frequently is with a traffic in slaves, plunges the male sex into irremediable degradation.* This practice is supposed to have originated with the Cainites in the ante-diluvian world; but for high and prudential reasons, it was tolerated rather than approved under the Patriarchal dispensation and the Mosaic law. In the ancient Asiatic monarchies, especially in the period of their decline, this usage sometimes prevailed to a licentious extent; but in the modern Mahometan states, where polygamy is indulged in to the most libidinous excess, this defective constitution of the family has proved one of the greatest barriers to political and intellectual improvement.

In ancient Greece and Rome, how far superior was the legislation on marriage! How much more healthful and vigorous was the constitution of domestic society! What a fine idea do we conceive of the early Romans, when we read that though the law sanctioned divorce, yet that for the first five hundred years, no individual took advantage of such a law! In the corrupt ages of Imperial Rome, divorce, permitted and practised on the most frivolous pretexts, was productive of more baneful consequences than Polygamy in its worst form.

Polygamy is proscribed in all Christian states. In the Catholic church, marriage is raised to the dignity

* See Concordia.

of a sacrament; and divorce is not permitted, even in the case of adultery. Hereby woman is invested with the highest degree of dignity, and even influence —the union and happiness of the family are best secured—and the peace and stability of the state itself acquire the strongest guarantees. It is well known that some of the ablest divines of the church of England also uphold in all cases the indissolubility of the nuptial tie; and the British legislature, by according divorce only after adultery, and by rendering the obtaining of it a matter of difficulty and expense, has wisely opposed limitations to the practice. Yet, as was truly observed some years ago in parliament, the increase in the number of applications for divorce, is one among the many signs of the decline of morality in this country.

The principal Protestant churches regard marriage as a religious ceremony; and so the general proposition of Schlegel is correct, that all Christian states recognize the sanctity of the nuptial bond. And here is one of the main causes of the superior happiness, freedom and civilization enjoyed by Christian nations.

§§ II. *Christian justice is founded on a system of equity, and the Christian state has from its constitution, an essentially pacific tendency.*

Schlegel observes that the difference between strict law and equitable law is the most arduous problem in all jurisprudence. Strict law is an abstract law, deduced from certain general principles, applied without the least regard to adventitious circumstances. Equity, on the other hand, pays due regard to such circumstances, examines into the peculiar state of things, and the mutual relations of parties; and forms her decisions not according to the caprice of fancy, or the waywardness of feeling, but according to the general principles of right, applied to the variable circumstances and situations of parties.

According to the author's definition, the object of the institution of the state is the maintenance of internal and external peace. Justice is the only basis of peace; but *justice is here the means, and not the end.* If justice were the end for which the state was constituted, then neither external nor internal peace could ever be procured or maintained; for the state would then be compelled to wage eternal war against all who, at home or abroad, were guilty of injustice, and could never lay down its arms till that injustice were removed.

As peace is essentially the end of that great corporation called the state; it follows that the justice by which its foreign and domestic policy must be regulated, is not that strict or absolute justice spoken of above, but that temperate or conciliatory equity, which is alone applicable to the concerns of men. The maxim, "a thousand years' wrong cannot constitute an hour's right," if applied to civil jurisprudence, would introduce interminable confusion, hardship and misery in the affairs of private life, and if applied to constitutional and international law, would lead to perpetual anarchy at home, and to endless, exterminating war abroad.

The Christian religion, as it comes from God, is eminently social—hence it abhors the principle of absolute or inexorable right, whether applied to civil or public law—hence the Christian state, or the state animated with the spirit of Christianity, is in its tendency essentially pacific.

This pacific policy of the state, however, so far from excluding, necessarily implies the firm, uncompromising vindication of its rights and interests, whether at home or abroad; and the repression of evil doers within, or a just war without, is often the only means of attaining the object for which the state was constituted—to wit, the maintenance of peace. On

the other hand, the revolutionary state, or the state where, in opposition to existing rights and interests, new rights and interests are violently enforced; and where, in subversion of all established institutions, new institutions, conceived according to abstract and arbitrary theories, are violently introduced; the revolutionary state, I say, is, from its nature and origin—no matter what form it may assume—necessarily driven to a course of iniquitous policy—to disorganizing tyranny within, and to fierce, relentless hostility without.

Against the pacific character of the Christian state, the bloody wars of Charlemagne with the Saxons, the Crusades of a later period, and the religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are commonly objected. In the course of the work, to which this memoir is prefixed, the reader will find these several objections victoriously answered.

§ III. *The Christian state recognizes the legal existence of Corporations, and depends on their organic co-operation.*

The author has before shown that the Christian religion, following the principle of conciliatory equity, recognizes, without reference to their origin, all existing rights and interests. Hence the Christian religion can co-exist, and has in fact co-existed, with every form or species of government. But there are some governments which, from their spirit and constitution, are more congenial than others to Christianity; and it is in this sense we speak of the Christian state.

We have already seen that there are five essential and eternal corporations—the family—the church—the state—the guild, and the school. These great corporations have each their several and subordinate institutions or corporations, which are accidental and transitory by nature, and consequently vary with time, place, and circumstances.

The Christian state is that which best secures and

preserves to those essential corporations, and all their subordinate institutions, their due sphere of action. Hence our author shows that, under certain circumstances, and in certain countries, the Republic, whether democratic or aristocratic, may answer that end as well or even better than monarchy; and that it is only because, in great empires, monarchy is best calculated to maintain the free developement and organic co-operation of corporations, that it may be called, par excellence, the Christian state. But what form of monarchy is best adapted for this end? The absolute monarchy* is certainly the least: there then remain only the representative system, and the constitution of the three estates, or as the Germans call that mode of government, Stände-verfassung.* Schlegel proceeds to examine the respective characteristics of those two forms of government, and to show the points in which they agree, and in which they differ. The constitution of estates is the old, legitimate constitution of the European states, whether republican or monarchical; but, in too many countries, this noble institution has been undermined by despotism, or destroyed by revolution. On the other hand, the representative system is comparatively modern, and, on the continent, has, amid the great convulsions produced by the French revolution, sprung out of a defective and superficial imitation of the British constitution. It is therefore to the latter constitution the author, when he has occasion to treat of the representative system, principally directs the attention of his readers.

As to the points of resemblance between this system and the states-constitution, both have legislative

* In a number of the Concordia for 1820, Adam Müller frankly declared his opinion, that all the friends of social order would soon concur in the necessity of re-establishing the constitution of the three estates. This is language which at Vienna is as bold as it is auspicious.

assemblies—in both, petitions and remonstrances are addressed to the throne, and in both, the grant of subsidies rests chiefly with the commons; while to the enactment of every law, the concurrence of the different branches of the legislature is essentially requisite. But, in many important points, these two forms of government totally differ. In the states-constitution, the crown is invested with more power and dignity. With more dignity, because to the crown landed estates are annexed; and the sovereign, instead of being a pensioner on the bounty of his parliament, is the first independent proprietor:—with more power, because in the representative system, the King, with the single exception of choosing an administration, can perform no act without the sanction of his ministers. Thus in this political system, according to the author's remark, the substantial power of royalty is vested in the hands of the ministry.

The next point of difference is that the representative system, particularly in England, rests too exclusively on the material basis of property; and that intelligence is there deprived of an adequate share in the national representation.* In the states-constitution, where the clerical and scientific classes form a separate estate, or distinct branch of the legislature, intelligence is invested with all the dignity and glory which human society can confer. The clergy, who are the representatives of revealed faith, or the fixed and immutable part of intelligence, correspond to the aristocracy, or the representatives of fixed property—while the scientific class, representing science, or the variable and progressive part of intelligence, corresponds to the Commons, the representatives of move-

* Those political changes which since Schlegel's death have occurred in the British constitution, while they have deprived property of much of its legitimate influence, have caused intelligence to be even less represented than heretofore in the legislature.

able property. Hence, Francis Baader has ingeniously called the clergy the Upper House of intelligence, and the scientific class, the Lower House.*

The last point of difference is that, while in many of the modern representative systems, municipal corporations are despised and rejected, they form the very key-stone of the states-constitution. The Revolutionists, who have had so prominent a share in the formation of these representative governments, know full well that municipal corporations form the best security of the rights of the family—the firmest ramparts of popular freedom. They are thus objects of peculiar hatred to men who, so far from wishing the commonalty to obtain stability or cohesion in their constitution, are desirous they should ever remain a loose, shifting mass of disunited atoms, ready to receive any form or impress which despotism may impose. Hence the war which at different times, and in different countries, regal or democratic tyranny has waged against these admirable institutions. In the English constitution, on the other hand, which has preserved so many elements of the old Christian monarchy, the free, municipal institutions have been carefully maintained. "The true internal strength and greatness of England, (says Schlegel) consist, as is now almost universally admitted by profound political observers, far more in the vigour and freedom of municipal corporations, better preserved in that country than elsewhere, than in her admired political constitution itself."† Defective as many parts of that constitution appeared to the author, yet on the whole, he highly valued the vigorously constituted, but temperate and mitigated, aristocracy of 1688. He knew that the remnants of the old Christian constitution were better preserved there than in any of the great con-

* Philosophische Schriften, vol. ii. † See Concordia, page 66.

tinental monarchies:* that the British government possessed elements of stability as well as of freedom, to which those monarchies, in their existing degeneracy, could in vain pretend; and that the very peculiarities in the British constitution, to which he most strongly objected, had their origin in local circumstances, deep-rooted wants, and remote historical events. That extreme jealousy of regal power which that constitution betrays—that undue preponderance of property over intelligence—that political predominance of the aristocracy, which, though rendered necessary by the excessive depression of royalty and of the clergy, was certainly calculated to impede the organic development of the democracy, and thereby to expose the body politic to dangerous revulsions—in fine, that fierce collision of parties, which that constitution nurses and encourages—all reveal the fearful struggles by which it came into life. The imitation of this constitution which, by bringing back to the European nations the reminiscence of their ancient freedom, has naturally excited their enthusiastic admiration—the imitation of that constitution, I say, difficult at all times, has been rendered in some countries utterly impracticable by the studious rejection of two of the great hinges on which, for a hundred and fifty years, it has turned—I mean the predominance of the aristocracy on the one hand, and the free, municipal organization of the commonalty on the other. In many of the German states, as the author observes, the representative system works well; because the legislators have had the wisdom to connect the new with anterior institutions.

On the whole, what has been said of the Gothic architecture, may be applied to the old Christian mo-

* According to the just remark of Burke, the states-constitution was in latter ages, better preserved in the Republics than in the monarchies of Europe.—See his letters on a regicide peace

narchy—it was never brought to perfection. That lofty ideal of government, which Christianity had traced to the nations of the middle age—that admirable constitution, which was a partial reflection of the constitution of the church itself, and wherein were blended and united the principles of love and intelligence, stability and activity—in other words, where a paternal royalty, an enlightened priesthood, a mild aristocracy, a loyal, yet free-spirited, commonalty controlled, aided, balanced, and defended each other—that lofty ideal has never been—probably never will be—fully realized. Yet there are many reasons to suppose that a momentous, and not very distant, futurity will be charged with realizing, as far as human infirmity will permit, this ideal conception of the Christian state.

Such is an outline of the principal features in Schlegel's political system—a system which I have endeavoured, as far as my feeble powers permitted, to explain, illustrate, and enforce.

But while in the East of Germany, this great luminary and his satellite were shedding their mild radiance of political wisdom, a star of the first magnitude rose above the Western horizon of Germany, and filled the surrounding heaven with the splendour of its light. The illustrious Goerres, already celebrated for his profound researches in archæology, and many admirable political writings, published in 1819 his work, entitled "Germany and the Revolution," which produced so extraordinary a sensation, and was at the time so ably translated by Mr. Black. This work was followed in 1821 by that writer's still more wonderful production, entitled "Europe and the Revolution,"—a production which in the soundness of its doctrines—the generosity of its sentiments—the depth and comprehensiveness of its views—and the copiousness and variety of historical illustration brought forward in their support—surpasses perhaps all the mighty

works in defence of social order and liberty which the momentous events of the last fifty years have called forth in different parts of Europe. With a few slight shades of difference, the political views of Goerres mainly accord with those of Schlegel; but, living under the free government of Bavaria, the former is able boldly to proclaim truths which the latter at Vienna was able only to hint. Goerres unites the strong, practical sense of Gentz—the masterly learning and profound and comprehensive understanding of F. Schlegel—to great boldness of character, and a style of peculiar force and condensation. While the political glance of Schlegel was mostly directed towards the past—that of Gentz to the present hour—the eye of Goerres is turned more particularly to the future. Had the counsels of this illustrious man been more generally followed, the perilous crisis, in which for the last five years Germany has been involved, would have been happily averted, or at least better provided against. Himself and Schlegel may be considered as the supreme oracles of that illustrious school of liberal Conservatives, founded by our great Burke, and which numbers besides the eminent Germans, whose names have already been mentioned, a Baron de Haller in Switzerland—a Viscount de Bonald in France*—a Count Henri de Merode in Belgium—and a Count Maistre in Piedmont: men whose writings contain, in a greater or less degree, the seeds of the future political regeneration of Europe.

* Among these great conservatives, M. de Bonald is the only one who can be regarded as favourable to Absolutism. As long as this great writer deals in general propositions, he seldom errs; but when he comes to apply his principles to practice, then the political prejudices in which he was bred, and which a too limited course of reading has failed to correct—lead him sometimes into exaggerations and errors. On the whole he is as inferior to Burke as a publicist, as he is superior to him as a metaphysician.

While engaged in the editorship of the Concordia, Schlegel gave a new edition of his works with considerable improvements and augmentations. Actively as his time had been employed, a long period had now elapsed since he had given any great production to the world; and he was now preparing those immortal works, which were to shed so bright an effulgence round the close of his life. In the rapid review which has been here taken of his critical, philological and historical writings, nothing has been said of his philosophical pursuits; and yet philosophy was his darling study — philosophy, which the ancients called "the science of divine and human things," was alone capable of filling the vast capacity of Schlegel's mind. At the age of nineteen, he had already read all the works of Plato in their original tongue; and six-and-thirty years afterwards, he expressed a vivid recollection of the delight and enthusiasm which the perusal had excited in his youthful mind. In 1800, he commenced his philosophical career at the University of Jena before an admiring audience; we have already seen him at Paris, amid his philological labours, devoting a portion of his time to the cultivation of philosophy; and, amid all the struggles and occupations of his subsequent life, he would ever and anon snatch some moment to pay his homage to this celestial maid—this mistress of his heart—this object of his earliest enthusiasm and latest worship.

A very distinguished friend and disciple of Schlegel's, the Baron d'Eckstein asserts that, towards the close of the last century, a confederacy was formed among some men of the most superior minds for the regeneration of natural science—for the revival of the lofty physics of remote antiquity, when nature was regarded only as the splendid and almost transparent veil of the spiritual world. The members of this intellectual association were Schelling, the two Schlegels, the poet

Tirck, Novalis, and the celebrated geographer Ritter. This confederacy was dissolved, when the pantheistical tendency of Schelling's philosophy became more apparent; and Frederick Schlegel, in particular, became afterwards the most strenuous and formidable opponent of a philosophic system which appeared to him, and rightly enough, only a more subtle and refined Spinozism. On the true nature of this philosophy, however, opinion was much divided; many religious men among the Protestants ranged themselves under its banners; even some of the Orthodox entered into terms of accommodation with it; and the great Catholic theologian, Zimmer, thought that, by means of this system, he could obtain a clearer conception of the great Christian mystery of the Trinity. Enormous as may be the errors contained in this philosophy, yet, as few philosophic systems are entirely erroneous, the philosophy of Schelling, which appears to have undergone a purification in its course, has been attended with some beneficial results. It has led to a more profound and spiritual knowledge of nature—it has been, to many, a point of transition from the materialism and rationalism of the eighteenth century to the Christian Religion—and, indeed, this effect it has had on its illustrious founder himself, who has for some years returned to the bosom of Christianity, and who probably will be remembered by posterity more for his recent labours as a profound Christian naturalist, than for the pantheistic reveries of his youth.*

* This view of the matter is confirmed by the high authority of the great Catholic philosopher—Molitor. Speaking of Schelling and his disciples, he says, (in the words of his recent French translator,) *Quoique leurs premiers ouvrages ne respirent pas encore entierement l'esprit pur et véritable,* mais soient entachés plus ou moins de panthéisme ou de naturalisme, comme cela etoit presque necessaire à une époque encore si profondément enfoncée dans l'incrédulité et l'orgueil, cependant leurs principes ont eveillé l'esprit religieux, et donné une base plus profonde aux verités de cet ordre. C'est dans

Schlegel's earlier philosophical, as well as historical, works are no longer to be met with, and have not yet been re-published. In the Concordia for 1820, we find an outline of those lectures on the Philosophy of life, which the author delivered at Vienna, in the year 1827. This work immediately preceded the one to which this memoir is prefixed; and, as it embodies those general philosophical principles, of which in the latter an application is made to history, a rapid analysis of its doctrines, particularly in the psychological and ontological parts, will be useful, nay, almost necessary, to the elucidation of many passages in the following translation. But how can I attempt the analysis of a work where the arrangement of a formal, didactic discussion is studiously avoided—where the author pours forth his thoughts with all the freedom of conversation—high, spiritual conversation—where such is the exuberant fulness of his ideas, such the shadowy subtlity of his perceptions, that even the German language, copious and philosophical as it is, seems at times inadequate to their expression. Long as Germany had been habituated to the genius of Schlegel, she herself seems to have been startled by the appearance of a work where the boldest, the most unlooked for, the sublimest vistas of philosophy were opened to her astonished view.

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ce sens qu'on a retravaillé toutes les sciences, et l'on peut dire que ces hommes ont plus contribué á conduire vers la religion, que cette multitude de compendium dogmatiques du siecle dernier. He then adds, "Ou peut se faire une idée de la direction religieuse de la physique par les écrits de Steffens, Schubert, Pfaff, et Baader. Cet esprit conduira encore á de plus grands resultats; et bientot de nouvelles découvertes faites au ciel etoilé, sur la terre et dans son interieur, aussi bien que dans l'organisme, affermiront et mettront dans une nouvelle lumière ces hautes verités connues des anciens, mais que le sens stupide des modernes rejetait comme des songes et des superstitions." p.p. 165-6. Philosophie de la Tradition, traduite de l'Allemand. Paris. 1834.

Bespeaking then the indulgence of the reador, I will now proceed to lay before him an outline of some of the principal ideas on psychology and ontology, contained in the Philosophy of Life.

The consciousness of man is composed of mind, soul, and body. The soul is the centre of consciousness. The consciousness of man may be best understood by comparing it with that of other created beings. The existence of brutes is extremely simple—they have only a body—they have no mind—they have, properly speaking, no soul—at least, their soul is completely mingled with their corporeal frame; so that on the destruction of the latter, it reverts to the elements, or is absorbed in the general vital energy of nature (Natur-seele). In the scale of existence superior to man, the angelic spirits are represented in Holy Writ, and in the Traditions of all nations, as pure, intellectual beings, devoid of a *gross* corporeal frame. But have they no body whatsoever? Schlegel ascribes to them what he calls in his beautiful language, "an etherial body of light." This opinion, it must be confessed, has comparatively few supporters in the modern schools of theology, whether in the Catholic or Protestant churches; but it was maintained by many of the ancient Fathers, and, in modern times, it has met with the high sanction of the great Leibnitz. Schlegel assigns no reason for his opinion; but I have means of knowing that another great Christian philosopher of the age has, in his unpublished system of metaphysics, adduced very cogent arguments in support of this theory. With the exception of this subtle, etherial, luminous body, the celestial Spirits, according to the author, are nothing but intelligence or mind. They have, strictly speaking, no soul; for the distinctive faculties of the soul (as will be presently shown) are reason and imagination; and these faculties cannot be ascribed to

beings in whom an intuitive understanding needs not the slow deductions, and analytic process of reason; nor wants a medium of communication with the world of sense, like imagination. Hence the lines of the great German poet fully represent the difference, as well as the resemblance, in the intellectual action of man and the angelic spirits:

> "Science, O man, thou shar'st with higher spirits;
> But Art thou hast alone."

Hence the nature of brutes is simple— that of angels two-fold—that of men three-fold.

The third part of human consciousness, the body—its organic laws, powers, and properties, the philosopher must leave to the naturalist. It is only when it has reference to the higher parts of consciousness that its properties can be made the matter of his investigation. The soul and the mind form the fit and peculiar subject of his enquiries. To the mind belong the faculties of will and understanding—to the soul, those of reason and imagination. Schlegel observes it is remarkable that the three different species of mental alienation correspond to the three parts of human consciousness. Thus monomania springs from some error deeply rooted in the mind—frenzy is the disorder of a soul that has broken loose from all the restraints of reason; and idiotcy arises from some organic defect in the brain. The last is the effect of physical, the two former the consequence of moral, and frequently accidental, causes. The author lays it down as a general principle, subject, however, to many modifications and exceptions, that in man mind or thought predominates—in woman soul or feeling prevails. Hence in marriage, which is a sacred union of souls, the deficiencies in the psychology of either sex are happily and mutually supplied. On this subject, Schlegel has some of the most touching and beau-

tiful reflections, which a loving heart and a noble fancy have ever inspired.

Imagination (Einbildungs-kraft) is the inventive faculty—Reason (Vernunft) the regulative—Understanding (Verstand) the penetrative, or in a higher degree the intuitive—and the Will (Wille) the moral, faculty. To these primary faculties, or as the author styles them, these main boughs of human consciousness, four secondary facultics are subservient—the memory—the conscience—the passions or natural impulses, and the outward senses. The memory is the intermediate faculty between the understanding and the reason—the conscience the intermediate faculty between the reason and the will—the passions or natural impulses the intermediate faculty between the will and the imagination—and the outward senses form the connecting link between the imagination and the body.

Reason is the regulative faculty implanted in the soul. In real life, it corresponds to what we commonly call judgment, and is that faculty by which the transactions of men are regulated, and the resolutions of the will are brought to maturity, whether in sacred or secular concerns. In science, Reason is the dialectical or analytic faculty, by which the discoveries of Imagination and the perceptions of the Understanding receive a definite form—the faculty of analysis, arrangement, and combination. Reason in itself is not inventive—it makes no discoveries—it is rather a negative than a positive faculty—but it is the indispensable arbitress, to whose decision Understanding and Imagination must submit their various productions.

Imagination, on the other hand, is the inventive faculty in art, poetry and even science. No great discovery, says the author, can be made even in the mathematics, without imagination. This assertion may

strike us as strange; but we must remember that Leibnitz declared he was led to his great mathematical discoveries by the aid of metaphysics; and that imagination necessarily enters into the composition of a great metaphysical genius, few will be disposed to question. Here, however, if I may be allowed to offer an opinion, Schlegel does not appear to me to have traced, with sufficient distinctness, the boundaries between imagination and understanding.

Understanding is the faculty of apprehension—it penetrates into the inward essence of things, and discerns the manifestations of the divine or human mind in their several revelations and communications.—Thus the naturalist, whose eye searches into the inward life of nature—the statesman, who can fathom the most deep-laid plans of a hostile policy—the theologian, who can discover the most hidden sense of Scripture, may be said to possess in an eminent degree, the faculty of understanding.

Will is the other faculty implanted in the mind of man—the faculty on whose good or evil direction that of all the other faculties of mind and soul essentially depends. Independently of the moral direction of the will, its innate strength or weakness, its steadiness or vacillation, proportionably augment or diminish the power of all the other faculties. How far moderate abilities, when directed by a firm, tenacious, perseverant will can avail—to what a degree of success they may sometimes lead, daily experience may serve to convince us.

Originally all these faculties, will and understanding, reason and imagination, were harmoniously blended and united in the human consciousness; but since, at the fall of man, a dark spirit interposed its shadow betwixt him and the Sun of Righteousness, disorder and confusion have entered into his mind and soul, and troubled their several faculties. Thus

the understanding often points out a course which the will refuses to follow; and the will, on the other hand, is often disposed to pursue the good and right path, were the blind or narrow understanding competent to direct it. Not only are will and understanding in frequent collision with one another, but each is at variance with itself. What the will resolves to-day it shrinks from to-morrow! How often does the understanding view the same subject in a different light at different times! How much do time, circumstance, and humour, place the same truth in a clearer or obscurer aspect! The same opposition is observable betwixt reason and imagination. Where fancy is the strongest in the house, how often doth she spurn the warnings of her more homely and unpretending sister—reason. Again, where reason has the ascendancy, what groundless aversion, and paltry jealousy does she not frequently evince at the superior nature of her brilliant sister! Or, to drop this figurative language, how often do we behold a man of lofty imagination very deficient in practical sense; and again, in your man of strong sense, how frequently dull and pedestrian is the fancy! In real life what a deplorable schism exists between poets and artists on the one hand, and men of business on the other! What mutual contempt and aversion do they not frequently exhibit! Well, this schism is nothing else than the external realization of the inward conflict between reason and imagination.

With respect to the four secondary faculties—memory—conscience—the natural impulses—and the outward senses—faculties, which, as the author says, cannot from their importance be termed subordinate, but should rather be called subsidiary or assigned;—Schlegel shews that, as regards the first, the decay of the memory precedes the decline of the reason, and its sudden and entire loss brings about the ex-

tinction of the latter faculty. In the same way the deadness of the conscience argues the utmost depravity of the will. The conscience is the memory of the will, as the memory is the conscience of the understanding.

"The natural impulses," says Schlegel, "where they appear exalted to passion, are to be regarded as nothing else but the motions of a will, that has been overpowered by the false illusions of imagination. The middle position of the impulses betwixt the will and the imagination, as well as the abused co-operation of those two faculties in any passion or sensual gratification, become habitual, is apparent particularly in those inclinations which man has in common with the brute, and where the viciousness lies only in their excess or violence."* "Aspiration after infinity is natural to man, and belongs essentially to his being. Whatever is defective or disorderly in his impulses, consists only in their unbounded gratification—in the perversion of that aspiration after infinity towards perishable, sensual, material, and often most unworthy, objects; for that aspiration, natural as it is to man, where it is pure and genuine, can be gratified by no sensual indulgence and no earthly possession."† In the brute, the gratification of the natural appetites is regular, uniform, subject to no vicissitudes or excesses, and entails no injury on his nature, because undisturbed and unvitiated by the false illusions of imagination.

Lastly, with regard to the outward senses, there are, philosophically speaking, but three, sight, hearing, and touch—for under the last, taste and smell are included; and it is remarkable how these severally correspond to the three parts of human consciousness. The sight is pre-eminently the sense of

* Philosophie der Sprache, p. 118—19. † Ibid. p. 121.

the mind—hearing the sense of the soul—while the touch is peculiarly the sense of the body; the sense given to the body for its special protection and preservation. The loss of the first two senses the body can survive—but it perishes with the utter extinction of the last. Those expressions in common parlance, a good artist-like eye—a fine musical ear—prove the close connexion which mankind has always felt to exist between the outer senses and the higher faculties of man.

"Had the soul," says the author, "not been originally darkened and troubled—had it remained in a clear, luminous repose in its God—then the human consciousness would have been of a far more simple nature than at present; for it would have consisted only of *understanding, soul*, and *will*. Reason and imagination, which are now in such frequent collision with the will and understanding, as well as with each other, would then have been absorbed in those higher faculties. Even the conscience would not then have been a special act, or special function of the judgment—but a tender feeling—a gentle, almost unconscious pulsation of the soul. The senses and the memory, those ministrant faculties which, in the present dissonance of the human consciousness, form so many distinct powers of the soul, would, in its state of harmony, have been mere bodily organs."*

So much for the author's psychology—let us now proceed to the ontological part of the work.

To the Supreme Being, will and understanding belong in a supreme degree; in him they exist in the most perfect harmony—will is understanding, and understanding will. But with no propriety can the faculty of reason be ascribed to the Deity; and it is

* Philosophie des Lebens, p. 112. N.B. I have somewhat abridged the author's words.

remarkable, says the author, that nowhere in Holy Writ, nor in the sacred traditions of the primitive nations, nor in the writings of the great philosophers of antiquity, is the term reason ever used in reference to Almighty God. It is only among a few of the later, degenerate, and rationalist sects of philosophy, the Stoics for example, that the expression *Divine Reason* is ever met with. If such an expression is incorrect or unsound, with still less fitness and decorum can the faculty of imagination be assigned to the God-head—the very term would shock the understandings, and revolt the inmost feelings, of all men.

The Deity reveals himself unto men in four different ways—in Scripture, (including of course its running and necessary commentary, ecclesiastical Tradition);—in Nature—in Conscience, and in History.

"Holy Writ," says the author, "as it is delivered to us, and as it was begun and founded three-and-thirty centuries ago, does not exclude the elder sacred traditions of the preceding two thousand four hundred years; or the revelation, which was the common heritage of the whole human race. On the contrary, it contains very explicit allusions to the fact that such a revelation was imparted to the first man, as well as to that patriarch who, after the destruction of the primeval world of giants, was the second progenitor of mankind. As the sacred knowledge, derived from this revelation, flowed on every side, and in copious streams over the succeeding generations of men, the ancient and holy traditions were soon disfigured, and covered over with fictions and fables; where, amid a multitude of remarkable vestiges and glorious traits of true religion, immoral mysteries and Bacchanalian rites were often intermixed, and truth itself, as in a second chaos, buried under a mass of contradictory symbols. Thence arose that Babylonish confusion of languages, sagas, and symbols, which is universally

found among the ancient, and even the primitive nations. In the great work of the restoration of true religion, which accordingly we must regard as a second revelation, or rather as a second stage of revelation, a rigid proscription of those heathen fictions, and of all the immorality connected with them, was the first and most essential requisite. But in that gospel of creation, which forms the introduction to the whole Bible, that elder revelation, accorded to the first man and to the second progenitor, is expressly laid down as the ground-work; and in this introduction, we shall find the clue to the history and religion of the primitive world—nay, it is the true Genesis of all historical science."*

Now with respect to the secondary or more indirect modes, by which the Deity communicates himself to men, the author observes that "Nature, too, is a book written on both sides, within and without, in which the finger of God is clearly visible:—a species of Holy Writ, in a bodily form—a glorious panegyric, as it were, on God's omnipotence, expressed in the most vivid symbols. Together with these two great witnesses of the glory of the Creator, scripture, and nature—the voice of conscience is an inward revelation of God—the first index of those other two greater and more general sources of revealed truths; while History, by laying before our eyes the march of Divine Providence—a Providence whose loving agency is apparent as well in the lives of individuals as in the social career of nations—History, I say, constitutes the fourth revelation of God."†

We have next to consider the conduct of Divine Providence in the education of the human race. How do we educate the boy? We first endeavour to awaken his sense—then we cultivate his soul, or his moral

* Philosophie des Lebens. pp. 86—7. † Ibid, p. 85.

faculties; while at the same time, we aid the gradual unfolding of his understanding. It is so with the divine education of mankind. In the primitive revelation, indeed, the first man received the highest intellectual illumination; an illumination which, though at his fall it was obscured by sin, still shines with a shorn splendour through all the history and traditions of the primeval world. When, however, by the abuse he had made of his great intellectual powers, man was successively deprived of all those high gifts with which he had been originally endowed; when by the errors of idolatry, he had lapsed into a state of intellectual infancy; then it was necessary that his sense should first be awakened to divine things; and this was accomplished in the Mosaic revelation. But this revelation was only preparatory to another, destined to renovate the soul of humanity, and gradually illumine its intelligence. This regeneration of the moral faculties of man was achieved immediately and directly by Christianity; for, without this moral regeneration, any sudden illumination of the intellect would have been hurtful rather than beneficial to mankind. Under the benign influence of Christianity, the scientific enlightenment of the human mind has been wisely progressive; but it seems reserved for the last glorious ages of the triumphant church to witness the full meridian splendour of human intelligence. Then the great scheme of creation will be fulfilled; and the intellectual light, which played around the cradle, will brighten the last age, of humanity.

Let us now proceed to consider Nature in herself, and in her relations to God, to the spiritual intelligences, and to man.

Nature was originally the beautiful, the faultless work of the Almighty's hand. But the rebel angel in his fall brought disorder and death into all material creation. Hence arose that chaos, which the breath

of creative Power only could remove. Thus, according to the author, a wide interval occurs between the first and second verse of Genesis. "In the beginning," says the inspired historian, "God made heaven and earth," that is, as the Nicene Creed explains it, the visible and invisible world. "And the earth was without form, and void: and darkness was upon the face of the deep." But that void—that darkness—that chaos proceeded not from the luminous hand of an all-wise and all perfect Maker—but from the disturbing influence of that fiend whom Holy Writ hath called, with such unfathomable depth, the "murderer from the beginning." Hence Schlegel terms him in his sublime language, "the author or original of death"—(Erfinder des Todes).

On a subject of such vast importance, I presume not to offer an opinion: but I must merely content myself with the humble task of analysis. It may be proper to observe, however, that this opinion of Schlegel's would seem, from a passage in the work of the great Catholic writer—Molitor, to be consonant with the tradition of the ancient synagogue. "The Cabala," says he, "was divided into two parts—the theoretical and the practical. The former was composed of the patriarchal traditions on the holy mystery of God, and the divine persons; on the spiritual creation, and the fall of the angels; *on the origin of the chaos of matter, and the renovation of the world in the six days of creation;* on the creation of man, his fall, and the divine ways conducive to his restoration."†

"Death," says Schlegel, "came by sin into the world. As by the fall of the first man, who was not created for death, nor originally designed for death, death was transmitted to the whole human race; so

† See Philosophie de la Tradition, traduit de l'Allemand, p. 26. Paris, 1834.

by the preceding fall of him, who was the first and most glorious of all created Spirits, death came into the universe, that is, the eternal death, whose fire is inextinguishable. Hence it is said: 'Darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the earth was without form, and void'—as the mere tomb-stone of that eternal death; 'but the Spirit of God moved over the waters, and therein lay the first vital germ of the new creation.'"*

But if such is the origin of Nature, how is its existence perpetuated, and what will be its final destiny?

Nature, as was said above, is a book of God's revelation, written within and without. The outer part of this sacred volume attests the supreme power, wisdom, and goodness of the Creator in characters too clear and luminous to be unperceived or misread by the dullest or the most vitiated eye. The inner pages of this book comprise a still more glorious revelation of God—but their language is more mysterious, and much which they contain seems to have been wisely withheld, or rather withdrawn from the knowledge of mankind. It was this acquaintance with the internal secrets of Nature, derived partly from revelation, and partly from intuition, which gave the men of the primitive, and especially the antediluvian, world such a vast superiority over all the succeeding generations of mankind. But it was the abuse of that knowledge, also, which brought about in the primeval world a Satanic delusion, and a gigantic moral and intellectual corruption, of which we can now scarcely form the remotest idea. But this key to the inward science of Nature, which was taken away from a corrupt world, that had so grossly abused it, seems now about to be restored to man, renovated as his soul and intelligence have been by a long Christian education. The

* Philosophie des Lebens, p. 126.

physical researches of the last fifty years, especially in Germany, lead the enquirer more and more to the knowledge of this important truth, stamped on all the pages of ancient tradition, and never effaced from the recollection of mankind, to wit, the action of spiritual intelligences on the material world. The nature of this aotion is briefly adverted to in the following passage (among many others to the same purport), in the Philosophy of Life. "It is especially of importance," says the author, "for the understanding of the general system of Nature, to observe how the modern chemistry mostly dissolves and decomposes all solid bodies, as well as water itself, into different forms of elements of air, and thereby has taken away from Nature the appearance of rigidity and petrifaction. There are every where living elemental powers hidden and shut up under this appearance of rigidity. The quantity of water in the air is so great that it would suffice for more than one deluge; a similar inundation of light would occur, if all the light latent in darkness were at once set free; and all things would be consumed by fire, if that element in the quantity in which it exists, were suddenly let loose. The salutary bonds, by which these elemental powers are held in due equilibrium, one bound by the other, and kept within its prescribed limits, I will not now make a matter of investigation; nor now examine the question, whether *these bonds be not perhaps of a higher kind than naturalists commonly suppose.*"

The great apostle of the Gentiles represents all Nature as sighing for her deliverance from the bondage of death. "Every creature groaneth and travaileth in pain, even now." Some chapters in the Philosophy of life may be considered as one luminous commentary on that text. My limits will permit me to cite but one passage.

"That planetary world of sense, and the soul of the earth imprisoned therein, is only apparently dead. Nature only sleeps, and may again be awakened: and sleep is, if not the essence, yet a characteristic mark of Nature. Every thing in Nature hath this quality of sleep; not the animals merely, but the plants also sleep; and in the course of the seasons on the surface of the globe, there is a constant alternation between waking and slumber." . . . . "That soul, he continues, which slumbers under the prodigious tombstone of outward nature—a soul, which is not alien, but half akin to us—is divided between the troubled, painful reminiscence of eternal death, in which it originated—and the bright flowers of celestial Hope, which grow on the borders of that dark abyss. For this earthly Nature, as Holy Writ saith, is indeed subjected to nothingness—yet without its will, and without its fault: so it looks forward in expectation of Him who hath so subjected it—it looks forward in the hope that it may one day be free—one day have a share in the general resurrection and consummate revelation of God's glory; and for this last great day of future creation Nature anxiously sighs, and yearns from her inmost soul."*

I will now wind up this analysis with the following passage, in which the distinctive peculiarities of the different parts of ontology are shortly stated: "The distinctive characteristic of nature is sleep, or the struggle between life and death; the distinctive characteristic of man is imagination (for reason is a more negative faculty); the distinctive characteristic of the intelligences superior to man is restless, eternal activity, implanted in the very constitution of their being; and the distinctive characteristic of the Deity, in relation to his creatures, is infinite condescension."

* Philosophie des Lebens, p. 129.

Such is a brief summary of some of the principal observations in the psychological and ontological parts of the Philosophy of Life. And in this summary it has been my intention not so much to give an analysis of those parts, as to convey to the reader a clue for the better understanding of many passages in the work I have translated. The remaining parts of the "Philosophy of Life" are devoted to a variety of ethical, political, and æsthetic reflections, which it is unnecessary to enter into here.

Scarce had Germany recovered from the enthusiasm which this work, (the Philosophy of Life) excited; when its illustrious author delivered, in the year 1828, the following course of Lectures on the "*Philosophy of History*," which are now presented to the reader in an English garb. Defective as may be the medium through which the English reader becomes acquainted with this work, he will be enabled to form on it a more impartial, as well as more enlightened, judgment than any the translator could pronounce; and he will, therefore, only venture to observe that it has been considered in every respect worthy of its author's high reputation.

Towards the close of the year 1828, Schlegel repaired to Dresden; and that city, where the torch of his early enthusiasm had been first kindled, was now to witness its final extinction. He delivered in this city, before a numerous and distinguished auditory, nine lectures on the "Philosophy of Language," (Philosophie der Sprache), wherein he developed and expanded those philosophical views already laid down in his "Philosophy of Life." This work is even more metaphysical than the one last named—with untiring wing, the author here sustains his flight through the sublimest regions of philosophy. This production displays at times a gigantic vastness of conception which almost appals—we might almost say, that this

mighty intelligence had in his ardent aspirations after Immortality, burst his earthly fetters—or that Divine Providence, judging a degenerate world unworthy of hearing such sublime accents, had called him to continue his hymn in eternity. On Sunday, the 11th of January, 1829, he was, between ten and eleven o'clock at night, preparing a lecture, which he was to deliver on the following Wednesday. He had in his former lectures spoken of Time and Eternity—he had called Time a distraction of Eternity—he had adverted to those ecstacies of great Saints, which he called transitions to Eternity. He was now in this lecture discoursing of the different degrees of knowledge attainable by man—of the perception—the notion—and the idea. He began a sentence with these remarkable words:—"Das ganz vollendete und vollkommne verstehen selbst aber"—"But the consummate and the perfect knowledge"—when the hand of sickness arrested his pen. That consummate and perfect knowledge he himself was now destined to attain in another and a better world; for, at one o'clock on the same night, he breathed out his pure and harmonious soul to heaven.

His death, though sudden, was not unprovided. He had ever lived up to his faith—through his writings there runs an under-current of calm, unostentatious piety; and I know no writer more deeply impressed with a sense of the loving agency of Providence. A gentleman, well acquainted with some of his most intimate friends, has assured me that, for some time prior to his death, he had prosecuted his devotional exercises with more than ordinary fervour; and that on the morning of that Sunday on which his last illness seized him, he had been united to his Lord in the Holy Communion—a presage and an earnest, let us hope, of that intimate union he was destined to enjoy in the long and cloudless day of Eternity!

The melancholy news of his death, when conveyed to his distinguished friend—Adam Müller, then at Vienna, gave such a violent shock to his feelings, that it brought on a stroke of apoplexy, which terminated his existence. A chain of the most exalted sympathies had united those souls in life—what marvel if the electric stroke, which prostrated the one should have laid low the other!

Frederick Schlegel married early in life the daughter of the celebrated Jewish philosopher Mendelsohn. This lady followed her husband in his change of religion. Mrs. Schlegel is one of the most intellectual women in Germany—she is advantageously known to the literary world by her German translation of Madame de Stael's Corinne; and report has acribed to her elegant pen several of the poems in her husband's collection.*

In conclusion, I will endeavour to recapitulate the obligations which literature and science owe to the great man, whose literary biography I have attempted to sketch.

To have, in common with his illustrious brother, established a system of broad, comprehensive, synthetic criticism, by which the principles of ancient and modern art were unfolded to view—by which we were introduced into the intellectual laboratories of genius, made to assist at the birth of her mighty conceptions, and by whose plastic touch the great works of ancient and modern poetry were in a manner created anew:—to have unlocked the fountains of the old Germanic minstrelsy, and refreshed the poetry of his age with a new stream of fictions:—to

* A complete edition of Frederick Schlegel's works in fifteen volumes 8vo. was announced in 1822. Of this edition ten volumes only, as I am informed, have appeared. To these fifteen volumes must be added the four which were published in the last years of the author's life, making in all nineteen volumes.

have been among the first to do for philology what the Stagyrite had done for natural history; by classifying languages not according to their outward form, but their internal organization, not according to a specious, though often delusive, etymology, but according to grammatical structure: to have deciphered the mysterious wisdom of old days, and with admirable tact to have caught the spirit of the primitive world, as disclosed in its sagas and its symbols, its poetry and its philosophy: next to have evoked from the dust the better philosophy of ancient Greece, and presented her venerable form to the renewed love and respect of mankind, partly by an admirable translation of portions of Plato,* partly by luminous critiques, and partly again by the example of his own philosophy, in form as well as spirit so eminently Platonic: then, in the field of modern history, to have traced the rise and progress of the European states, the genius of their civil and political institutions, the causes and effects of their moral and social revolutions, with an extent of learning, a spirit of impartiality, and a depth and comprehensiveness of understanding, unsurpassed by preceding writers, and in his own age rivalled only by his illustrious countryman—Goerres: lastly, to have put the crowning glory to a life so full of glorious achievement by his last philosophical works, where a strong and broad light is thrown upon the mysteries of psychology, where the most important questions of ontology are treated with equal boldness and sublimity of thought, and magnificence of fancy,

* This translation I have not read, nor would I be at all competent to pronounce any opinion on its merits; but a very able judge, the Baron d'Eckstein, has declared that in point of grace, energy, and dignity, it surpasses, as far as it goes, the famous translation by Schleiermacher.

while even on physics many bright hints are thrown out, which a deeper science will know one day how to turn to account: such are the the services which this illustrious man has rendered to the cause of literature and philosophy. Living in an age which is only an epoch of momentous transition from the adolescence to the virility of the human mind, he was evidently, together with some other chosen spirits of his time, the precursor of an era of Christian philosophy, when, to use the language of a young, but very distinguished French writer,* "the sterile dust of futile abstractions will be swept away, and the antique faith will appear crowned with all the rays of science." "Already," continues the writer just quoted, "even infidel science, astonished at her own discoveries, which disconcert alike ideology and materialism, begins to suspect

"There are more things in heaven and earth
Than are dreamt of in that philosophy."†

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* The Abbé Gerbet.

† N. B. The authorities on which the several facts relative to Schlegel's personal history have been advanced are the following: 1. The Biographie des Vivans. Paris. 2ndly. An article for July, 1829, in the French Globe (apparently an abridgment of the account of Schlegel in the German work, Conversations Lexicon). 3. A fuller and better account of the author in a French work published several years ago at Paris, entitled, "Memoirs of distinguished Converts." For the knowledge of some facts, the writer is also indebted to the interesting journal "Le Catholique," which Schlegel's able friend and disciple, the Baron d'Eckstein, edited at Paris, from 1826 to 1829.

THE

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THE most important subject, and the first problem of philosophy, is the restoration in man of the lost image of God; so far as this relates to science.

Should this restoration in the internal consciousness be fully understood and really brought about, the object of pure philosophy is attained.

To point out historically in reference to the whole human race, and in the outward conduct and experience of life, the progress of this restoration in the various periods of the world, constitutes the object of the Philosophy of History.

In this way, we shall clearly see how, in the first ages of the world, the original word of Divine revelation formed the firm central point of faith for the future re-union of the dispersed race of man; how later, amid the various power, intellectual as well as political, which in the middle

period of the world, all-ruling nations exerted on their times according to the measure allotted to them, it was alone the power of eternal love in the Christian religion which truly emancipated and redeemed mankind: and how, lastly, the pure light of this Divine truth, universally diffused through the world, and through all science—the term of all Christian hope, and Divine promise, whose fulfilment is reserved for the last period of consummation—crowns in conclusion the progress of this restoration.

Why the progress of this restoration in human history, according to the word, the power, and the light of God, as well as the struggle against all that was opposed to this Divine principle in humanity, can be clearly described and pointed out only by a vivid sketch of the different nations, and particular periods of the world; I have alleged the reasons in various passages of the present work. With this view, I have, for the purpose of my present undertaking, availed myself, as far as these discoveries lay within my reach, of the rich acquisitions which the recent historical researches of the last ten years have furnished for the better understanding of the primitive world, its spirit, its languages, and its monuments. Besides the well-known names mentioned with gratitude in the text, of Champollion, Abel Remusat, Colebrooke, my bro-

ther, Augustus William Von Schlegel, the two Barons Humboldt; and for what relates to natural history, G. H. Schubert; I have to name with the utmost commendation for the section on China, Windischmann's Philosophy; and for what relates to the Hebrew Traditions, drawn from the esoteric doctrines and other Jewish sources of information, which are here most copiously used, I have been much indebted to a very valuable work which appeared at Frankfort, 1827, entitled "The Philosophy of Tradition," and which reflects the highest honour on its anonymous author.* To these I might add the names of Niebuhr, and Raumer; but in the later periods of history, we are not so much concerned about new researches on certain special points as about a right comparison of things already known, and a just conception of the whole. In the Philosophy of History, historical events can and ought to be not so much matter of discussion, as matter for example and illustration; and if on those points, where the researches of the learned into antiquity are as yet incomplete, any historical particulars should, in despite of my utmost diligence, have been imperfectly conceived or represented, yet the

* The author is now known to be Professor Molitor. The second part of this work has just appeared in Germany. Trans.

main result, I trust, will in no case be thereby materially impaired.

The following sketch of the subject will shew the order of the Lectures, and give a general insight into the plan of the work. The first two Lectures embrace, along with the Introduction, the question of man's relation towards the earth, the division of mankind into several nations, and the two-fold condition of humanity in the primitive world.

The subjects discussed in the seven succeeding Lectures are as follows:—the antiquity of China, and the general system of her empire—the mental culture, moral and political institutions, and philosophy of the Hindoos—the science and corruption of Egypt—the selection of the Hebrew people for the maintenance of Divine revelation in its purity—the destinies and special guidance of that nation—next an account of those nations of classical antiquity, to whom were assigned a mighty historical power, and a paramount influence over the world—such as the Persians, with their Nature-worship, their manners, and their conquests—the Greeks, with the spirit of their science, and dominion—and the Romans, together with the universal empire which they were the first to establish in Europe. The next five Lectures treat of Christianity, its consolidation and wider diffusion

throughout the world—of the emigration of the German tribes, and its consequences—and of the Saracenic empire in the brilliant age of the first Caliphs. Then follows an account of the various epochs and the various stages of the progress which the modern European nations have made in science and civil polity, according to their use and application of the light of truth vouchsafed to them. So the subjects here treated are—the establishment of a Christian imperial dignity in the old German empire—the great schism of the West, and the struggles of the middle age and the period of the Crusades, down to the discovery of the New World, and the new awakening of science. The three following Lectures are devoted to the Religious Wars, the period of Illuminism, and the time of the French Revolution.

The eighteenth and concluding Lecture turns on the prevailing spirit of the age, and on the universal regeneration of society.

We have yet to make the following observations with respect to this undertaking, in which we have attempted to lay the foundations of a new general Philosophy.

The first awakening and excitement of human consciousness to the true perception and

knowledge of truth has been already unfolded in my work on " the Philosophy of Life."

To point out now the progressive restoration in humanity of the effaced image of God, according to the gradation of grace in the various periods of the world, from the revelation of the beginning, down to the middle revelation of redemption and love, and from the latter to the last consummation, is the object of this Philosophy of History.

A third work, treating of the science of thought in the department of faith and nature, will with more immediate reference to the Philosophy of Language, comprehend the complete restoration of consciousness, according to the triple divine principle.

It is my wish that this work should as soon as circumstances will permit, speedily follow the two works " The Philosophy of Life," and " The Philosophy of History," now presented to the Public.

Vienna, Sept. 6th, 1828.

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ERRATUM.

At the 7th line from the top of page xxxviii (Life of Schlegel) instead of "put forth by party spirit," read "put forth by ignorance or party spirit."

PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY.

LECTURE I.

INTRODUCTION.

"And the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; but the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." GEN. i. 2.

By philosophy of history must not be understood a series of remarks or ideas upon history, formed according to any concerted system, or train of arbitrary hypotheses attached to facts. History cannot be separated from facts, and depends entirely on reality; and thus the Philosophy of history, as it is the spirit or idea of history, must be deduced from real historical events, from the faithful record and lively narration of facts—it must be the pure emanation of the great whole — the one connected whole of history, and for the right understanding of this connexion a clear arrangement is an essen-

tial condition and an important aid. For although this great edifice of universal history, where the conclusion at least is still wanting, is in this respect incomplete, and appears but a mighty fragment of which even particular parts are less known to us than others;—yet is this edifice sufficiently advanced, and many of its great wings and members are sufficiently unfolded to our view, to enable us, by a lucid arrangement of the different periods of history, to gain a clear insight into the general plan of the whole.

It is thus my intention to render as intelligible as I possibly can the general results and the connection of all the past transactions in the history of the human race; to form a true judgment on the particular portions or sections of history, according to their intrinsic nature and real value in reference to the general progress of mankind, carefully distinguishing what was injurious, what advantageous, and what indifferent; and thereby, as far as is possible to the limited perceptions of man, to comprehend in some degree that mighty whole. This perception — this comprehension — this right discernment of the great events and general results of universal history, is what might be termed a science of history; and I would have here preferred that term, were it not liable to much misconception, and might have been understood as referring more to special and learned inqui-

ries, than the other name I have adopted to denote the nature of the present work.

If we would seize and comprehend the general outline of history, we must keep our eye steadily upon it; and must not suffer our attention to be confused by details, or drawn off by the objects immediately surrounding us. Judging from the feelings of the present, nothing so nearly concerns our interests as the matter of peace or war; and this is natural, as in a practical point of view they are both affairs of the highest moment; while the courageous and successful conduct of the one insures the highest degree of glory, and the solid establishment and lasting maintenance of the other may be considered as the greatest problem of political art and human wisdom. But it is otherwise in universal history, when this is conceived in a comprehensive and enlarged spirit. Then the remotest Past, the highest antiquity, is as much entitled to our attention as the passing events of the day, or the nearest concerns of our own time.

When a war, indeed, carried on more than two thousand years ago, in which the belligerent parties have long since ceased to exist, when every thing has been since changed—when a long series of historical catastrophes has intervened between that period and our own; when such a warfare, offering as it does but at best a remote analogy to the circumstances of nearer times, and consequently possessing no

immediate interest, has been investigated by the mighty intellect of a Thucydides, pourtrayed by him in the highest style of eloquence, and unfolded to our view with the most consummate knowledge of mankind, of public life, and of the most intimate relations of Government; such a warfare then retains a permanent interest, and is a lasting source of instruction. We love to dive into the minutest details of an event so widely removed from us—and such a study is to be regarded and prized as highly useful, were it only as an exercise of historical reflection, and a school of political science. This remark will equally hold good, when the internal feuds of a less powerful state have been analyzed and laid open by the acute perspicacity and delicate discrimination of a Machiavelli. And still more, perhaps, when a great system of pacification, like that which Augustus gave, or promised to give to the whole civilized world, and established for a certain period at least, has been fathomed by the searching eye of a Tacitus, and by his masterly hand delineated in its ulterior progress and remoter effects; shewing, as he does, how that surface, apparently so calm, concealed numberless sources of disquiet—an abyss of crime and destruction—how that evil principle in the degenerate government of Rome became more and more apparent, and, under a succession of wicked rulers, broke out into paroxysms more and more fearful.

As a school of political science and historical reflection, the study of these and similar classical historical works is of inestimable advantage. But independently of this, and considered merely in themselves, all those countless battles—those endless, and even, for the greater part, useless wars, of which the long succession fills up for so many thousand years the annals of all nations, are but little atoms compared with the great whole of human destiny. The same, with a slight distinction, will hold good of so many celebrated treaties of peace in past ages, when these have lost all interest for real life and the present order of things;—treaties, which though brought about by great labour, and upheld by consummate art, were yet internally defective, and sooner or later, and often quickly enough, fell to pieces and were destroyed.

From all these descriptions of ancient wars, and treaties of peace, no longer applicable or of interest to the present world or present order of things, historical philosophy can deduce but one, though by no means unimportant, result. It is this—that the internal discord, innate in man and in the human race, may easily and at every moment break out into real and open strife—nay, that peace itself—that immutable object of high political art, when regarded from this point of view, appears to be nothing else than a war retarded or kept under by human dexterity; for some secret disposition—some

diseased political matter, is almost ever at hand to call it into existence. In the same way as a scientific physician regards the health of the body, or its right temperature, as a happy equipoise—a middle line not easy to be observed between two contending evils—we must ever expect in such an organic imperfection a tendency to, or the seeds of, disease in one shape or another.

Political events form but one part, and not the whole, of human history. A knowledge of details, however great and various it may be, constitutes no science in the philosophic sense of the word, for it is in the right and comprehensive conception of the whole that science consists.

As the greater part of the nine hundred millions of men on the whole surface of the earth, according to the highest estimate of a hazardous calculation, are born, live and die, without a history of them being possible, or without their reckoning a fraction in the general history—so that the extremely small number of those called historical men, forms but a rare exception—so there are nations and countries, which in a general comparative survey of nations, serve but as a mark or evidence of some particular stage of civilization, without of themselves holding any place in the general history of our species, or conducing to the social progress of mankind, or possessing any weight or importance in the scale of humanity.

There is a point of view, indeed, from which the matter appears under a different aspect, and is really different. To the all-seeing eye of Providence, every human life, however brief its duration, however apparently insignificant, presents a point of internal development and crisis, consequently a species of history, cognizable and visible to that Eye only, and therefore not entirely without an object. But this point of view belongs to another order of things, and is no longer historical—it has reference to the immortal destinies of the human soul, and the connection of the present life with another world invisible to us. But our historical science is limited to the department of man's present existence; and in our historical enquiries we must not lose sight of this principle.

But the internal development of mind, so far as it is historical, belongs as much as the external events of politics to the department of human history, and must by no means be excluded from it. Among these rare exceptions of historical men, must be named that ancient master of human acuteness who was the teacher of Alexander the Great, and who perhaps holds not an humbler or less important place in this exalted sphere than the conqueror himself, although this philosopher, whose genius embraced nature, the world and life, was by his own contemporaries less honoured and celebrated than by a remote posterity. Here in our western world, and long

after the kingdoms founded by the Macedonian conqueror had disappeared, and were forgotten, Aristotle for many centuries reigned the absolute lord of the Christian schools, and directed the march of human science and human speculation in the middle age. Whether he were always rightly understood and studied in the right way is another question, for here we are speaking of his overruling influence and historical importance. Nay, in later times, he has materially served the cause of the better natural philosophy founded on experience, in which he himself accomplished things so extraordinary for his age, and was originally, and for a long while, the guide and master.

The first fundamental rule of historical science and research, when by these is sought a knowledge of the general destinies of mankind, is to keep these and every object connected with them steadily in view, without losing ourselves in the details of special enquiries and particular facts, for the multitude and variety of these subjects is absolutely boundless; and on the ocean of historical science the main subject easily vanishes from the eye. In history, as in every branch of mental culture, the first elementary school-instruction is not merely an important, but an essential, condition to a higher and more scientific knowledge. At first indeed it is merely a nomenclature of celebrated personages and events—a sketch of the great his-

torical eras, divided according to chronological dates, or a geographical plan—which must be impressed on the memory, and which serves as a basis preparatory to that more vivid and comprehensive knowledge to be obtained in riper years. Thus this first knowledge stored up in the memory, and necessary for methodizing and arranging the mass of historical learning to be afterwards acquired, is more a preparation for the study of history, than the real science of history itself. In the higher grades of academic instruction, the lessons on history must vary with each one's calling and pursuits—one course of historical reading is necessary for the Theologian, another for the lawyer or civilian. To the physician, and in general to the naturalist, natural history, and what in the history of man is most akin to that science, will ever be the most captivating. And the philologist will find a boundless field for enquiry in special antiquarian researches, particularly now when, in addition to classical learning and the more common oriental tongues, the languages and historical antiquities of the remoter nations of Asia have attracted the attention of European scholars, and the original sources are becoming every day more accessible.

Even the sphere of modern political history, from which for the practical business of government so much is to be learned, will be found equally extensive—when, besides the modern

classical works, we look to the countless multitude of private memoirs and other historical and political writings; especially at a time and in a world where even periodical publications and newspapers have become a power and an art or a science, and society itself falls more and more under the sway of journalism. If in this department of politics and statistics, we add also the number of unprinted documents, we shall find that the archives of many a state would alone furnish occupation for more than a man's life.

In all such special departments of historical science, the great whole of history is made subordinate to some secondary object; and this cannot be otherwise. It may even be advantageous for the profounder knowledge and more skilful exposition of universal history that we should seriously investigate some particular branch of history; and, in a science so various, select some special subject for more minute enquiry; but this can never be done without some decided predilection — some almost party bias towards the subject. Yet such special enquiries are only preparatory or auxiliary to the general science or philosophy of history—but not that science itself. Thus at the outset of my literary career, I devoted a considerable time to a very minute study of the Greeks—*

* Schlegel's first great work was entitled "the Greeks and the Romans," published in the year 1797.

and subsequently I applied myself to the Hindoo language and philosophy, at that time more difficult of access than at the present day.* In the struggles of life, and amid the public dangers of our times, I was alive to a patriotic feeling for the history of my own country, and recent times; and, perhaps, there are some among my present hearers who remember the historical lectures I delivered in this spirit eighteen years ago in this imperial city. † It is now my wish, and the object I propose to myself, to discard all antiquarian, oriental or European predilections for particular branches of history, and to unfold to view, and render completely clear and intelligible, the great edifice of universal history in all its parts, members and degrees.

The first fundamental rule here laid down, with respect to the mode of treating general history—namely to keep the attention fixed on the main subject, and not to let it be distracted or dissipated by a number of minute details—concerned more the method of historical science. The second rule regards the subject and purport of history, and stands in more immediate connexion with the first portion of this work—that

* The result of our author's researches on Hindoo literature and philosophy was evidenced in his work entitled "The Language and Wisdom of the Indians," published in 1808.

† Schlegel alludes to "The Lectures on Modern History," which he delivered at Vienna in the year 1810.

relating to primitive history. This second fundamental rule of historical science may be thus simply expressed:—we should not wish to explain every thing. Historical tradition must never be abandoned in the philosophy of history —otherwise we lose all firm ground and footing. But historical tradition, ever so accurately conceived and carefully sifted, doth not always, especially in the early and primitive ages, bring with it a full and demonstrative certainty. In such cases, we have nothing to do but to record, as it is given, the best and safest testimony which tradition, so far as we have it, can afford; supposing even that some things in that testimony appear strange, obscure and even enigmatical; and perhaps a comparison with some other part of historical science—or, if I may so speak, stream of tradition, will unexpectedly lead to the solution of the difficulty. Extremely hazardous is the desire to explain every thing, and to supply whatever appears a gap in history—for in this propensity lies the first cause and germ of all those violent and arbitrary hypotheses which perplex and pervert the science of history far more than the open avowal of our ignorance, or the uncertainty of our knowledge: hypotheses which give an oblique direction, or an exaggerated and false extension, to a view of the subject originally not incorrect. And even if there are points which appear not very clear to us, or which we leave unexplain-

ed—this will not prevent us from comprehending, so far at least as the limited conception of man is able, the great outline of human history, though here and there a gap should remain.

This matter will be best explained by an example that will bring us at once to the subject we propose to treat. Let us imagine some bold Navigators (and what we here suppose by way of example has more than once actually occurred) touching at some island inhabited by wild savages in the midst of the great ocean between America and Eastern Asia. This island lies, we suppose, at a very great distance from either Continent, and the same will hold good of it, though there be a group of islands. These savages have but miserable fishing-boats made of hollow trunks of trees, by which it is not easy to conceive how they could have been transported so far. The question now naturally occurs how has this race of men come hither?—

A Pagan natural philosophy, which even now dares often enough to raise its voice, would be very ready with its answer: "There, it would say, you see plainly how every thing has sprung from the pap of the earth—the primitive slime—there is no need of the far-fetched idea of an imaginary Creator—these self-existing men of the earth—these well known autocthones of the ancients—these true sons of nature—have risen up or crawled out of the fruitful slime of the earth."

A deeper physiological science would, independently of every other consideration, and looking merely to the natural organization of man, scout this wild chaotic hypothesis respecting his origin from slime. For this organic frame of the human body, which has become a body of death, is still endowed with many and wonderful powers, and still encloses the hidden light of its celestial origin.—Without, however, entering further into this enquiry, which falls not within the limits here prescribed, let us rather tacitly believe that although, as the ancient history saith, man was formed out of the slime of the earth; yet it was by the same Hand which invisibly conducts each individual through life, and has more than once rescued all mankind from the brink of the abyss, that his marvellous body was framed, into which the Maker himself breathed the immortal spirit of life. This divine in-dwelling spark in man, the Heathens themselves, notwithstanding the opinion about the autocthones, recognized in the beautiful tradition or fiction of Prometheus; and many of their first spirits, philosophers, orators and poets, and grave and moral teachers, have in one form or another, and under a variety of figurative expressions, borne frequent and loud and repeated testimony to the truth of a higher spirit, a divine flame, animating the breast of man. This universal faith in the heavenly Promethean light—or as we should rather say, this

spark of our bosoms—is the only thing we must here pre-suppose, and from which all our historical deductions must be taken. With the opposite doctrine—with the absolute unbelief in all which constitutes man really man—no history, and no science of history, is possible; and this is the only remark we shall here oppose to an infidelity that denies the existence of every thing high and godly. For the question respecting the creation of man, or as atheism terms it, the first springing up of the human race, is beyond the limits of history, and must be left to the decision of revelation and faith; for the question can be reached by no history, no science of history—no historical research. History begins, as this will be presently shown, with man's second step; which immediately follows his concealed origin antecedent to all history.

To recur now to the example already given of an island situated in the middle of the ocean, with its savage inhabitants and their miserable fishing-boats—the real solution, as experience has really proved, of this apparent difficulty is, on a nearer acquaintance with the subject, easily found. If, for example, the language and traditions of this rude, savage, or at least degraded, tribe, are minutely studied and investigated, then so striking a resemblance and affinity will be found with the languages and traditions of the races in either of the remotely

situated continents, that the most sceptical mind will hardly entertain a doubt respecting the common origin of both; for this community in language and traditions is too strong, too strikingly evident, to be ascribed with any degree of probability to the sport of accident. This truth now once firmly established, (for a community of language, tradition and race among all the nations of the earth is a truth almost unanimously received and acknowledged by those historical enquirers most versed in nature, and most learned in philology of the present age,) it becomes a mere matter of indifference, or one at least of minor importance, how and in what way this originally savage, or at least barbarized tribe first arrived hither; and it were a mere waste of labour to select, among the hundred conceivable or inconceivable accidents and possibilities which may have occasioned or led to this arrival, any particular one as the best explanation, and to found thereon some ingenious hypothesis, how the land on both sides may have been differently situated, before a closer connexion with this little island was broken off by the destructive floods; or, in which of the last great catastrophes of the earth that disjunction may have taken place. We may leave such conjectures to themselves, and, satisfied with the main result, proceed further in the historical investigation and survey of the earth. For, in truth, the earth's surface more narrowly and

carefully examined, furnishes in reference to man and his primitive history, far other and weightier problems than those involved in the example first selected.

It is generally known that in a great many places situated in various parts of the earth, in the interior of mountains and even on plains, sometimes near the surface, and sometimes at a greater or less depth in the interior of mountainous chains rising to a very great elevation above the level of the sea, there are found whole strata of scattered bones belonging to animal species either actually existing, or which formerly existed and are now totally extinct—the chaotic remains of an all destroying inundation that immediately remind us of the general tradition respecting the great Flood. In other places again extensive layers of coral, sea-shells, marine plants, and other products of the sea, imbedded in the firm soil, prove these tracts of land to have been an ancient bottom of the sea. According to all appearance, these are not only monuments of one great natural revolution, but these elemental gigantic sepulchres of the primitive world offer to the mind many and various problems which more nearly, indeed, regard the earth, but as that planet is the habitation of man, have in consequence an indirect, but proximate, reference to mankind and their earliest history. A single example will best serve to point out among so many things, which

are no longer perhaps susceptible of explanation, that which is of most moment to the historian; as well as the limits within which he should keep.

Not long back, about nine years ago, a cave was discovered in the county of Yorkshire in England, filled for the most part with the bones and skeletons of hyænas, of the same species now found in the southernmost point of Africa—the Cape of Good Hope. These bones were intermixed with those of tigers, bears, wolves, as also of elephants, rhinosceri, and other animals, among which were found the remains of the old large deer, that is not now to be met with in England. The profound Naturalist, Schubert, whom, in subjects of this kind, I willingly take for my guide, observes in his natural history with respect to this newly discovered cavern (which evidently belongs to another, long extinct, and anterior world of nature); that the opinion which would make a whole stratum of bones to have been swept thither by floods in so sound a state, and from so remote a distance, is perfectly inadmissible. He shews it to be much more probable that this cave was the den of a troop of hyænas, which had dragged thither the bones of the other animals; for this fell and rapacious animal feeds by preference on bones, which it knows how to break, as it is in the habit of raking up dead bodies.—What an immense interval separates

that now highly civilized state—those flourishing provinces—that country abounding, and almost overteeming with all the fruits of human industry, with all the productions of mechanic skill;—that cultivated garden, that Island-Queen, the mistress of every sea;—what an immense interval separates her from those savage times, when troops of hyænas prowled about the land, together with the other gigantic animals of the southern zone, and tropic clime!

Thus it is natural to suppose that in one of the last great revolutions of nature the climate of the earth has undergone a total change; and that originally the now icy north enjoyed a glowing warmth, a rich fertility, and all the fulness of luxuriant life. A number of still more decisive facts declare for this supposition, or, to speak more properly, this certainty; since we discover in the upper parts of Northern Asia, and in general throughout the Polar regions, entire forests of palm in the subterraneous strata, as also well-preserved remains of whole herds of elephants, and of many other kindred species of animals now totally extinct. Long before most of these facts were discovered, Leibnitz had conjectured that originally the earth in general, even in the north, enjoyed a much warmer temperature than in the present period of all-ruling and progressive frost; and Buffon and others have established on this idea their hypothesis of a vast central fire in the interior

of the earth. The interior parts of the earth and its internal depths are a region totally impervious to the eye of mortal man, and can least of all be approached by those ordinary paths of hypothesis adopted by naturalists and geologists. The region designed for the existence of man, and of every other creature endowed with organic life, as well as the sphere open to the preception of man's senses, is confined to a limited space between the upper and lower parts of the earth, exceedingly small in proportion to the diameter, or even semi-diameter of the earth, and forming only the exterior surface, or outer skin, of the great body of the earth. Even at a very slight depth below the earth's surface, all change of seasons ceases, and an even temperature eternally prevails, approximating rather to cold, than living heat. Yet on this side the earth is more easy of access than in the upper regions, where not only the higher Alps and glaciers are the last attainable limit to human daring, but even the pure ether of the supernal atmosphere made an aeronaut, celebrated for his disaster, learn at his own cost, how very near is that boundary where, in deadening cold, all life and all observation cease. It is in the physical, as in the moral world—where light and heat should exist, there two things are necessary—a power to give light and communicate heat, and a substance capable of receiving and absorbing the one and the

other. Where either condition is wanting, there reigns eternal darkness, and deadly and eternal cold; and so the fact, that the whole action of heat, and of all the life it produces, is confined entirely to this lower atmosphere, should awake attention rather than create surprise. In all matters, even of this sort, we cannot be too mindful of the necessity of confining our researches to that small narrowly circumscribed sphere inhabited by man, and of never exceeding those limits.

Thus to explain the fact that the habitable earth has not, as originally, so warm a temperature as the north, we need not have recourse to any supposition of a central fire suddenly extinguished, like an oven that becomes cold, or to any other violent hypothesis of the same kind; for this fact may be sufficiently accounted for by the last great revolution of Nature—the general deluge, which as may be assumed with great probability, produced a change in the heretofore much purer, balmier, and more genial atmosphere. That, towards the equator, the position of the earth's axis has undergone a change, and that thereby this great revolution in the earth's climate was occasioned, is indeed a bare possibility; but until further proof, this must be regarded as a purely gratuitous hypothesis. But without subscribing to these fanciful suppositions, and mathematical theories, and without wishing to

penetrate, with some geologists, into the hidden depths of the earth in quest of an imagined central fire, we shall find on the inhabited surface of the globe, or very near it, many proofs and indications of the once superior energy of the principle of fire — a principle whereof volcanoes whether subsisting or extinct, and the kindred phenomena of earthquakes, may be considered the last feeble, surviving effects; for not basalt only, but porphyry, granite, and in general all the primary rocks, and those which, according to the classifications of geologists, are more immediately akin to them, can be proved to be of a volcanic nature with as much certainty, as we can trace, in the horizontal secondary formations, the destructive influence and operation of the element of water. Hence this layer of subterraneous, though now in general slumbering fire, with all its volcanic arteries and veins of earthquakes, may once have been as widely diffused over the surface of the globe as the element of water, now occupying so large a portion of that surface. As volcanic rocks exist in the ocean, or rather at its bottom, and as their eruptions burst through the body of waters up to the surface of the sea; as their volcanic agency gives birth to earthquakes, and not unfrequently raises and heaves up new islands from the depths of the ocean; naturalists have concluded, with reason from these various facts, that the volcanic basis of the

earth's surface though tolerably near, must still be somewhat deeper than the bottom of the sea. And without stopping to examine the hypothesis relative to the immeasurable depth of the ocean, the opinion which fixes the earth's basis at about 30,000 feet, or one geographical mile and a half below the surface of the sea, does not exceed the modest limits of a well-considered probability. In the present period of the globe, water is the predominant element on the earth's surface. But if that volcanic power which lies deeper in the bosom of the earth, and the kindred principle of fire, had at an earlier epoch of nature, the same influence and operation on the earth, as water afterwards had; we can well imagine such an influence to have materially affected the lower atmosphere, and to have rendered the climate of the earth, even in the North, totally different from what it is at present.

The strata of bones formed by the old flood, and the buried remains of a former race of animals, call forth a remark, which is not without importance in respect to the primitive history of man:—it is, that among the many bones of other large and small land animals, which form of themselves a rich and varied collection of the subterraneous products of nature, the fossile remains of man are scarcely any where to be found. It has sometimes happened that what were at first considered the bones of

human giants have been afterwards proved to have been those of animals. It is so very rare an instance to meet in fossile remains with a real human bone, skull, jaw-bone or entire human skeleton (as in one particular instance was found enclosed in a lime-stone, mixed with some few utensils and instruments of the primitive world, such as a stone-knife, a copper axe, an iron club, and a dagger of a very ancient form, together with some human bones); that the very rareness of the exception serves only to confirm the general rule. Were we from this fact immediately to draw the conclusion that during all those revolutions of nature mankind had not yet existence, such an hypothesis would be rash, groundless, completely at variance with history—one to which many even physical objections, too long to detail here, might be opposed. That so very few, and indeed scarcely any human bones are to be found among the fossile remains of the primitive world, may possibly be owing to the circumstance that by the very artificial, hot, and highly seasoned food of men, their bones, from their chemical nature and qualities, are more liable to destruction than those of other animals. I may here repeat what I have already had occasion to remark, and what is here of especial importance, as applying particularly to the history and circumstances of the primitive world;—namely, that all things are not susceptible of an

entire, satisfactory, and absolutely certain explanation; and that yet we may form a tolerably correct conception of general facts; though many of the particulars may remain for a time unexplained, or at least not capable of a full explanation. So on the other hand, it would be premature, and little conformable to the grave circumspection of the historian, to reduce all those natural catastrophes (the vouching monuments and mysterious inscriptions of which are now daily disclosed to the eye of Science as she explores the deep sepulchres of the earth)— to reduce, I say, all those natural catastrophes exclusively to the one nearest to the historical times, and which indeed is attested by the clear, unanimous tradition of all, or at least of most ancient nations; for several mighty and violent, revolutions of nature, of various kinds, though of a less general extent, may possibly have happened, and very probably did really happen simultaneously with, or subsequently, or even previously to the last general flood.

The irruption of the Black Sea into the Thracian Bosphorus is regarded by very competent judges in such matters, as an event perfectly historical, or at least, from its proximity to the historical times, as not comparatively of so primitive a date. A celebrated Northern naturalist has shewn it to be extremely probable, that the Caspian Sea, and the lake Aral were originally united with the Euxine, and that

on the other hand the North Sea extended very far over land, and even near to those regions, leaving some marine plants very different from those of the Southern Seas. The sea originally must have stretched much farther over the earth and even over many places where now is dry land, as may easily be inferred from the great and extensive salt-steppes in Asia, Africa, and some parts of Eastern Europe, which furnish many and irrefragable proofs that the land was once occupied by the sea.

All these great physical changes are not necessarily and exclusively to be ascribed to the last general deluge. The presumed irruption of the Mediterranean into the ocean, as well as many other mere partial revolutions in the earth and sea, may have occurred much later and quite apart from this great event. The original magnificence of the climate of the North, as displayed in the luxuriant richness of all organic productions, is commemorated in many traditions of the primitive nations, especially those of Southern Asia; and in these sagas, the North is ever made the subject of uncommon eulogy. That the North enjoys a certain natural pre-eminence appears to be matter of certainty, and to be even susceptible of scientific demonstration. The northern and southern extremities of our planet appear at least to be very unlike, if we judge the terraqueous globe according to the present state of geographical

knowledge. While the old and new continents, the north of Asia and of America, extend in long and wide tracts of land high up towards the North Pole, so that the boundaries of land cannot be every where perfectly defined; water is the predominant element around the colder South Pole, towards which even the southernmost point of America, and the remotest Island of Polynesia—the extreme verge of land—make no near approach; and, beyond these points, so far as the boldest navigators have been able to penetrate, they have discovered only sea and ice, and no where a real Polar region of any great extent. Thus the South Pole is the cold and watery side, or as we should say in dynamics, the negative and weaker end of the earth's body, while the North Pole on the other hand appears to be the positive and stronger extremity; for, though the centre of the earth's magnetic attraction and magnetic life, accords not mathematically with the northern point, yet it lies at no very great distance from it. In other phenomena of nature, too, the real seat and principle of life will be found, not at the mathematical point, but a little removed from it.

Another circumstance worthy of consideration is, that the Northern firmament possesses by far the largest and most brilliant constellations, and that though the Southern firmament is embellished by its own, they are neither in the same number, nor of the same beauty. To the im-

pressions made by such objects, the men of the primitive ages were certainly far more alive than those of the present day ; and an obscure feeling for nature, grounded on the real natural superiority of the North, as well as the poetical sagas which were in part the natural offspring of such feelings, may have contributed to direct the stream of the first migrations of nations towards the North, and have occasioned the very early colonization and settlement of its regions : for, in primitive antiquity, a certain presentient instinct, it is right to suppose, was much oftener the primary cause of those migrations than such a spirit of commercial speculation as afterwards animated the Phænicians and their various colonies. We may here also observe that even in its present state, the remoter North has its own peculiar charms and advantages, and that by human industry it may attain to a much higher degree of productiveness, than we should be at first-sight tempted to suppose. In this sense ought to be taken the tradition of antiquity, as to the happy and virtuous people of the Hyperboreans ; and it is easy to understand it in this sense without inferring thence too many consequences. If on the other hand, some able and learned naturalists, led away by this fact, appear almost inclined to regard the region of the North Pole, once in the enjoyment of a warm southern temperature, as one of the earliest, nay the very earliest abode

of the human race; I cannot follow them in their hypothesis, opposed as it is to the positive and unanimous tradition of many and most ancient nations, pointing with one concurrent voice to central Asia as man's primitive dwelling-place. It appears indeed that the tradition of antiquity as to the Island of Atlantis ought to be considered historical; but instead of regarding this country as an island of the Blessed situated in the arctic circle, I think it much more natural to refer the whole tradition to an obscure nautical knowledge of America, or of those adjacent islands at which Columbus first touched, and to which the Phænician pilots (who beyond all doubt circumnavigated Africa) may not improbably have been driven in the course of their voyage.

I have laid it down as an invariable maxim constantly to follow historical tradition, and to hold fast by that clue, even when many things in the testimony and declarations of tradition appear strange and almost inexplicable, or at least enigmatical; for so soon as in the investigations of ancient history, we let slip that thread of Ariadne, we can find no outlet from the labyrinth of fanciful theories, and the chaos of clashing opinions. For this reason I cannot concur in the very violent hypothesis which a celebrated geologist, towards the close of the last century, M. De Luc, has hazarded respecting the deluge, and which the excellent Stol-

berg has adopted in his great historical work;* although the author of this theory, so far from intending to oppose it to the Mosaic account of the deluge, or to set aside the narrative of the inspired historian, conceived his hypothesis was calculated to furnish the strongest confirmation and clearest illustration of the sacred text. But I cannot reconcile his theory either with Holy Writ, or with the general testimony of historical tradition. The supposition is this, that the deluge was not a general inundation of the whole earth, according to the ordinary belief, but a mere change of the solid and fluid parts of the earth's surface, a dynamical transmutation of land and sea, so that what was formerly land became sea, and vice versâ. This is much more than can be found in the old account of the Noachian flood, or than a sound critical interpretation would infer; and the supposition that the names of rivers and countries occurring in the Bible, refer to those objects as they existed in the original dry land; and are again to be transferred to similar objects in the new land that sprang up with, or after, or out of the deluge; this supposition, I say, bears too evidently the stamp of arbitrary conjecture, to gain admission and credit with those who have

* The History of Religion by Count Frederick Stolberg;—a noble monument raised by genius and learning to the honour of Religion.—*Trans.*

taken historical tradition for their guide. If by the geological facts which offer, or which we think offer, satisfactory proof, not only of the general Noachian flood, but of more than one deluge and of still more violent catastrophes of nature; if by these geological facts before our eyes, such a total revolution and dynamic transmutation of land and sea were really proved (and the character of these proofs I must abandon to the investigation and judgment of others); this great revolution examined in an historical point of view, and in reference to the Mosaic history, must then be rather referred to that elder period, whereof it is said: "The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; but the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

These words which announce the presage of a new morn of creation, not only represent a darker and wilder state of the globe, but very clearly show the element of water to be still in predominant force. Even the division of the elements of the waters above the firmament, and of the waters below it, on the second day of creation—the permanent limitation of the sea for the formation and visible appearance of dry land, necessarily imply a mighty revolution in the earth, and afford additional proof that the Mosaic history speaks not only of one, but of several catastrophes of nature; a circumstance that has not been near enough attended to in

the geological interpretation and illustration of the Bible. But to the bold and ill-founded hypothesis above-mentioned, many geological facts may be opposed, for in the midst of vast tracts and strata of an ancient bottom of the sea, many spots are found covered with the accumulated remains of land animals, with trunks of trees and various other products of vegetation, pertaining not to the sea, but to dry land.

With the clearest and most indubitable precision, the Mosaic history fixes the primitive dwelling-place of man in that central region of Western Asia situate near two great rivers, and amid four inland seas, the Persian and Arabian gulfs on the one hand, and the Caspian and Mediterranean seas on the other, and which is likewise designated for the same purpose by the concurrent traditions of most other primitive nations. The ancient tradition of the European nations as to their own origin and early history, conducts the enquirer constantly to the Caucasian regions, to Asia Minor, to Phœnicia, and to Egypt; countries all of them contiguous to, in the vicinity and even on the coast of, that central region. Among the primitive Asiatic nations, the Chinese place the cradle of their origin and civilization in the north-western province of Shensee; and the Indians fix theirs towards the north of the Himalaya mountains. Thus this last tradition points to Bactriana, which, as it borders on Persia, approximates

consequently to that central region; whereof the holy and primitive country of the Persian Sagas, Atropatena or land of fire, now known by the name of Adherbijan forms a part. With a clearness and precision which admit of no doubt, the Mosaic history designates the two great rivers of that central region, the Tigris and Euphrates, by the same names which they have ever afterwards borne; and even the name of Eden, down to a later period, was affixed to a a country near Damascus, and to another in Assyria. The third river of Paradise has been sought for by some in a more Northerly direction—in the region of Mount Caucasus; and though not with equal certainty as in the other two instances, they have thought to find it in the Phasis. The fourth river towards the South, the old Interpreters generally took to be the Nile; but the description of its course is so widely different from the present situation of that river, and the present geography of the whole of those regions, that here at least a very great change must have occurred, in order to occasion this discrepancy between the old description of this river's course, and the present geography of the country.

In another circumstance, also, which has been mostly too little attended to, this disparity between the Mosaic description and the present conformation of those regions is particularly striking. The geography of the rivers of Para-

dise, at least of two or three, may be easily traced, though the fourth remains a matter of uncertainty; but the one source of Paradise in which those four rivers had their rise, in order thence to spread, and diffuse fertility over the whole earth—this one source, which is precisely the object of most importance, can no where be found on the earth; whether it be dried or filled up, or howsoever it has been removed. In attending to some indications in Scripture, and without transgressing the due limits of interpretation, may we not be permitted to conjecture that the first chastisement inflicted on man by expulsion from his first glorious habitation and primeval home, may have been accompanied by a change in Paradise brought about by some natural convulsion? To judge by analogy, and from circumstances, which even a passage in Holy Writ alludes to, this convulsion must have been rather a volcanic eruption, by which even at the present day the sources of rivers are dried up, and their course completely changed, than a mere inundation that we are ever wont to regard as the sole possible cause of physical revolutions. Many vestiges of such changes may perhaps be proved from even geological observation;—thus to cite only one example, the dead sea in Palestine itself may be included in the number of those lakes that bear very evident traces of a volcanic origin. The supposition, however, which we have ventured to

make, must not be looked upon in the light of a formal hypothesis, but rather as a question dictated by a love of enquiry, and by a desire for the further elucidation of a subject not yet sufficiently understood.

Thus have I now taken a general survey of the early condition of the globe, considered as the habitation of man, and as far as was necessary for that object; and in this rapid sketch, I have endeavoured, as far as was possible for a layman, to place in the clearest light the most remarkable and best attested facts and discoveries of geology, with a constant attention to the testimony of primitive and historical tradition. No longer embarrassed by these physical discussions, we may now proceed to meet the main question: "What relation hath man to this his habitation—earth; what place doth he occupy therein; and what rank doth he hold among the other creatures and co-habitants of this globe, what is his proper destiny upon, and in relation to, the earth, and what is it which really constitutes him Man?"

The absolute, and, for that reason, Pagan system of natural philosophy spoken of above, has indeed in these latter times had the courage, laudable perhaps in the perverse course which it had taken, to rank man with the ape, as a peculiar species of the general kind. When in its anatomical investigations, it has numbered the various characteristics of this human ape,

according to the number of its vertebræ, its toes, &c. it concedes to man, as his distinguishing quality, not what we are wont to call reason, perfectibility, or the faculty of speech, but "a capacity for Constitutions!" Thus man would be a liberal ape! And so far from disagreeing with the author of this opinion, we think man may undoubtedly become so to a certain extent, although the idea that he was originally nothing more than a nobler or better disciplined ape is alike opposed to the voice of history, and the testimony of natural science. If in the examination of man's nature we will confine our view exclusively to the lower world of animals, I should say that the possible contagion and communication of various diseases, and organic properties and powers of animals, would prove in man rather a greater sympathy and affinity of organic life and animal blood with the cow, the sheep, the camel, the horse and the elephant, than with the ape. Even in the venomous serpent and the mad dog, this deadly affinity of blood and this fearful contact of internal life exist in a different and nearer degree, than have yet been discovered in the ape. The docility too, of the elephant and other generous animals, bears much stronger marks of analogy with reason than the cunning of the ape, in which the native sense of a sound, unprejudiced mind will always recognize an unsuccessful and abortive imitation of man. The resemblance of

physiognomy and cast of countenance in the lion, the bull, and the eagle, to the human face—a resemblance so celebrated in sculpture and the imitative arts, and which was interwoven into the whole mythology and symbolism of the ancients—this resemblance is founded on far deeper and more spiritual ideas than any mere comparison of dead bones in an animal skeleton can suggest.

The extremes of error, when it has reached the height of extravagance, often accelerate the return to truth; and thus to the assertion that man is nothing more than a liberalized ape, we may boldly answer that man, on the contrary, was originally, and by the very constitution of his being, designed to be the lord of creation, and, though in a subordinate degree, the legitimate ruler of the earth and of the world around him—the vice-gerent of God in nature. And if he no longer enjoys this high prerogative to its full extent, as he might and ought to have done, he has only himself to blame; if he exercises his empire over creatures rather by indirect means and mechanical agency than by the immediate power and native energy of his own intellectual pre-eminence, he still is the lord of creation, and has retained much of the power and dignity he once received, did he but always make a right use of that power.

The distinguishing characteristic of man, and the peculiar eminence of his nature and his

destiny, as these are universally felt and acknowledged by mankind, are usually defined to consist, either in reason, or in the faculty of speech. But this definition is defective in this respect, that, on one hand, reason is a mere abstract faculty, which to be judged, requires a psychological investigation or analysis; and that on the other hand, the faculty of speech is a mere potentiality, or a germ which must be unfolded before it can become a real entity. We should therefore give a much more correct and comprehensive definition, if, instead of this, we said: The peculiar pre-eminence of man consists in this—that to him alone among all other of earth's creatures, the word has been imparted and communicated. The word actually delivered and really communicated is not a mere dead faculty, but an historical reality and occurrence; and for that very reason, the definition we have given stands much more fitly at the head of history, than the other more abstract one.

In the idea of the word, considered as the basis of man's dignity and peculiar destination, the internal light of consciousness and of our own understanding, is undoubtedly first included—this word is not a mere faculty of speech, but the fertile root whence the stately trunk of all language has sprung. But the word is not confined to this only—it next includes a living, working power—it is not merely an object and organ of knowledge—an instrument of teaching

and learning; but the medium of affectionate union and concilatory accommodation, judicial arbitrement and efficacious command, or even creative productiveness, as our own experience and life itself manifest each of those significations of the word; and thus it embraces the whole plenitude of the excellencies and qualities which characterize man.

Nature too, has her mute language and her symbolical writing; but she requires a discerning intellect to gain the key to her secrets, to unravel her profound enigmas; and, piercing through her mysteries, interpret the hidden sense of her word, and thus reveal the fulness of her glory. But he, to whom alone among all earth's creatures, the word has been imparted has been for that reason constituted the lord and ruler of the earth. As soon, however, as he abandons that divine principle implanted in his breast; as soon as he loses that word of life which had been communicated and confided to him; he sinks down to a level with nature, and, from her lord, becomes her vassal; and here commences the history of man.

END OF LECTURE I.

LECTURE II.

ON THE DISPUTE IN PRIMITIVE HISTORY, AND ON THE DIVISION OF THE HUMAN RACE.

"In the beginning man had the word, and that word was from God."

THUS the divine, Promethean spark in the human breast, when more accurately described and expressed in less figurative language, springs from the word originally communicated or intrusted to man, as that wherein consist his peculiar nature, his intellectual dignity and his high destination.—The pregnant expression borrowed above from the New Testament, on the mystery and internal nature of God, may with some variation, and bating, as is evident, the immense distance between the creature and the Creator, be applied to man and his primitive condition; and may serve as a superscription or introduction to primitive history in the following terms: "In the beginning man had the word, and that

word was from God—and out of the living power communicated to man in and by that word, came the light of his existence."—This is at least the divine foundation of all history—it falls not properly within the domain of history, but is anterior to it.—To this position the *state of nature* among savages forms no valid objection; for that this was the really original condition of mankind is by no means proved, and is arbitrarily assumed; nay, on the contrary, the savage state must be looked upon as a state of degeneracy and degradation—consequently not as the first, but as the second, phenomenon in human history—as something which, as it has resulted from this second step in man's progress, must be regarded as of a later origin.

In history, as in all science and in life itself the principal point on which every thing turns, and the all-deciding problem, is whether all things should be deduced from God, and God himself should be considered the first, nature the second, existence—the latter holding undoubtedly a very important place;—or, whether, in the inverse order, the precedency should be given to nature, and, as invariably happens in such cases, all things should be deduced from nature only, whereby the deity, though not by express, unequivocal words, yet in fact is indirectly set aside, or remains at least unknown. This question cannot be settled, nor brought to a conclusion, by mere dialectic strife, which rarely leads to its

object. It is the will which here mostly decides; and, according to the nature and leaning of his character, leads the individual to choose between the two opposite paths, the one he would follow in speculation and in science, in faith and in life.

Thus much at least we may say, in reference to the science of history, that they who in that department will consider nature only, and view man but with the eye of a naturalist (specious and plausible as their reasons may at first sight appear), will never rightly comprehend the world and reality of history, and never obtain an adequate conception, nor exhibit an intelligible representation of its phenomena.—On the other hand, if we proceed not solely and exclusively from nature, but first from God and that beginning of nature appointed by God, so this is by no means a degradation or misapprehension of nature; nor does it imply any hostility towards nature—an hostility which could arise only from a very defective, erroneous, or narrow-minded conception of historical philosophy. On the contrary, experience has proved that by this course of speculation we are led more thoroughly to comprehend the glory of God in nature, and the magnificence of nature herself—a course of speculation quite consistent with the full recognition of nature's rights, and the share due to her in the history and progress of man.

Regarded in an historical point of view,

man was created free—there lay two paths before him—he had to choose between the one, conducting to the realms above, and the other, leading to the regions below;—and thus at least he was endowed with the faculty of two different wills. Had he remained steadfast in his first will—that pure emanation of the deity—had he remained true to the word which God had communicated to him—he would have had but one will. He would, however, have still been free; but his freedom would have resembled that of the heavenly spirits, whom we must not imagine to be devoid of freedom because they are no longer in a state of trial, and can never be separated from God. We should, besides, greatly err, if we figured to ourselves the Paradisaic state of the first man as one of happy indolence; for, in truth, it was far otherwise designed, and it is clearly and expressly said that our first parent was placed in the garden of the earth to guard and to cultivate it. "To guard," because an enemy was to be at hand, against whom it behoved to watch and to contend. "To cultivate," possibly in a very different manner, yet still with labour, though, doubtless, a labour blessed with far richer and more abundant recompense than afterwards when, on man's account, the earth was charged with malediction.

This first divine law of nature, if we may so speak, by virtue of which labour and struggle

became from the beginning the destiny of man, has retained its full force through all succeeding ages, and is applicable alike to every class, and every nation, to each individual as well as to mankind in general, to the most important, as to the most insignificant, relations of society. He who weakly shrinks from the struggle, who will offer no resistance, who will endure no labour nor fatigue, can neither fulfil his own vocation, whatever it be, nor contribute aught to the general welfare of mankind.—But since man hath been the prey of discord, two different wills have contended within him for the mastery—a divine and a natural will. Even his freedom is no longer that happy freedom of celestial peace—the freedom of one who hath conquered and triumphed—but a freedom, as we now see it—the freedom of undetermined choice—of arduous, still undecided, struggle. To return to the divine will, or the one conformable to God—to restore harmony between the natural and the divine will, and to convert and transform more and more the lower, earthly and natural will into the higher, and divine one, is the great task of mankind in general, as of each individual in particular. And this return—this restoration—this transformation—all the endeavours after such—the progress or retrogressions in this path—constitute an essential part of universal history, so far as this embraces the moral development and intellectual march of humanity.—But the fact that man,

so soon as he loses the internal sheet-anchor of truth and life — so soon as he abandons the eternal law of divine ordinance, falls immediately under the dominion of nature, and becomes her bondsman, each individual may learn from his own interior, his own experience, and a survey of life; since the violent, disorderly might of passion herself is only a blind power of nature acting within us. Although this fact is historical, and indeed the first of all historical facts, yet as it belongs to all mankind, and recurs in each individual, it may be regarded as a psychological fact and phenomenon of human consciousness. And on this very account it does not precisely fall within the limits of history, and it precedes all history; but all the consequences or possible consequences of this fact, all the consequences that have really occurred, are within the essential province of history.

The next consequence which, after this internal discord had broken out in the consciousness and life of man, flowed from the development of this principle, was the division of the single race of man into a plurality of nations, and the consequent diversity of languages. As long as the internal harmony of the soul was undisturbed and unbroken, and the light of the mind unclouded by sin, language could be nought else than the simple and beautiful copy or expression of internal serenity; and conse-

quently there could be but one speech. But after the internal word, which had been communicated by God to man, had become obscured; after man's connection with his Creator had been broken; even outward language necessarily fell into disorder and confusion. The simple and divine truth was overlaid with various and sensual fictions, buried under illusive symbols, and at last perverted into a horrible phantom. Even Nature, that, like a clear mirror of God's creation, had originally lain revealed and transparent to the unclouded eye of man, became now more and more unintelligible, strange and fearful; once fallen away from his God, man fell more and more into a state of internal conflict and confusion.—Thus there sprang up a multitude of languages, alien one from the other, and varying with every climate, in proportion as mankind became morally disunited, geographically divided and dispersed, and even distinguished by an organic diversity of form;—for when man had once fallen under the power and dominion of nature, his physical conformation changed with every climate. As a plant or animal indigenous to Africa or America has a totally different form and constitution in Asia, so it is with man; and the races of mankind form so many specific variations of the same kind, from the negro to the copper-coloured American and the savage islander of the south sea.—The expression *races*, however, applied to

man, involves something abhorrent from his high uplifted spirit, and debasing to its native dignity.—This diversity of races among men no one ought to exaggerate in a manner so as to raise doubts as to the identity of their origin, for, according to a general organic law, which indeed is allowed to hold good in the natural history of animals, races capable of a prolific union must be considered of the same origin, and as constituting the same speces.—Even the apparent chaos of different languages may be classed into kindred families, which though separated by the distance of half the globe, seem still very closely allied. Of these different families of tongues, the first and most eminent are those which by their internal beauty, and by the noble spirit breathing through them and apparent in their whole construction, denote for the most part a higher origin and divine inspiration; and, much as all these languages differ from each other, they appear, after all, to be merely branches of one common stem.

The American tribes appeared indeed to be singularly strange, and to stand at a fearful distance from the rest of mankind; yet the European writer* most deeply conversant with those nations and their languages has found in their traditions and tongues, and even in their manners and customs, many positive and incon-

* Schlegel alludes to Alexander Von Humboldt.—*Trans.*

testable points of analogy with eastern Asia and its inhabitants.

When man had once fallen from virtue, no determinable limit could be assigned to his degradation; nor how far he might descend by degrees, and approximate even to the level of the brute; for, as from his origin he was a being essentially free, he was in consequence capable of change, and even in his organic powers most flexible.

We must adopt this principle as the only clue to guide us in our enquiries, from the negro who, as well from his bodily strength and agility as from his docile and in general excellent character, is far from occupying the lowest grade in the scale of humanity, down to the monstrous Patagonian, the almost imbecile Peshwerais, and the horrible cannibal of New Zealand, whose very portrait excites a shudder in the beholder. How, even in the midst of civilization, man may degenerate into the savage state; to what a pitch of moral degradation he may descend, those can attest who have had opportunities of investigating more closely the criminal history of great culprits, and even, at some periods, the history of whole nations. In fact, every revolution is a transient period of barbarism, in which man, while he displays partial examples of the most heroic virtue and generous self-devotion, is often half a savage. Nay, a war conducted with great animosity and

protracted to extremities, may easily degenerate into such a state of savage ferocity: hence it is the highest glory of truly civilized nations to repress andsubdue by the sentiment of honour, by a system of severe discipline, and by a generous code of warfare, respected alike by all belligerent parties, that tendency and proneness to cruelty and barbarity inherent in man.

Among the different tribes of savages, there are many indeed that appear to be of a character incomparably better and more noble than those above mentioned; yet, after the first ever so favourable impression, a closer investigation will almost always discover in them very bad traits of character and manners.—So far from seeking with Rousseau and his disciples for the true origin of mankind, and the proper foundation of the social compact, in the condition even of the best and noblest savages; and so little disposed are we to remodel society upon this boasted ideal of a pretended state of nature, that we regard it, on the contrary, as a state of degeneracy and degradation. Thus in his origin, and by nature, man is no savage:—he may indeed at any time and in any place, and even at the present day, become one easily and rapidly, but in general, not by a sudden fall, but by a slow and gradual declension; and we the more willingly adopt this view as there are many historical grounds of probability that, in the origin of mankind, this second fall of man was not im-

mediate and total, but slow and gradual, and that consequently all those tribes which we call savage are of the same origin with the noblest and most civilized nations, and have only by degrees descended to their present state of brutish degradation.

Even the division of the human race into a plurality of nations, and the chaotic diversity of human tongues, appear, from historical tradition, to have become general and complete only at a more advanced period; for, in the beginning, mention is made but of one separation of mankind into two races or hostile classes. I use the general expression historical tradition; for the brief and almost enigmatical, but very significant and pregnant, words, in which the first great outward discord, or conflict of mankind in primitive history, is represented in the Mosaic narrative, are corroborated in a very remarkable degree by the Sagas of other nations, among which I may instance in particular those of the Greeks and the Indians. Although this primitive conflict, or opposition among men, is represented in these traditions under various local colours, and not without some admixture of poetical embellishment, yet this circumstance serves only for the better confirmation of the fundamental truth, if we separate the essential matter from the adventitious details. Before I attempt to place in a clearer light this first great historical event, which indeed constitutes

the main subject of all primitive history, by showing the strong concurrence of the many and various authorities attesting it; it may be proper to call your attention to a third fundamental canon of historical criticism, which indeed requires no lengthened demonstration, and is merely this, that in all enquiries, particularly into ancient and primitive history, we must not reject as impossible or improbable whatever strikes us at first as strange or marvellous. For it often happens that a closer investigation and a deeper knowledge of a subject proves those things precisely to be true, which at the first view or impression, appeared to us as the most singular; while on the other hand, if we persist in estimating truth and probability by the sole standard of objects vulgar and familiar to ourselves; and if we will apply this exclusive standard to a world and to ages so totally different, and so widely remote from our own, we shall be certainly led into the most violent, and most erroneous hypotheses.

In entering on this subject we must observe that, in the Mosaic account, primitive and, what we call, universal history, does not properly commence with the first man, his creation or ulterior destiny, but with Cain—the fratricide and curse of Cain. The preceding part of the sacred narrative regards, if we may so speak, only the private life of Adam, which however

will always retain a deep significacy for all the descendants of the first progenitor.

The origin of discord in man, and the transmission of that mischief to all ages and all generations, is indeed the first historical fact; but on account of its universality, it forms, at the same time, as I have before observed, a psychological phenomenon; and while, in this first section of sacred history, everything points and refers to the mysteries of religion; the fratricide of Cain on the other hand, and the flight of that restless criminal to Eastern Asia, are the first events and circumstances which properly belong to the province of history. In this account we see first the foundation of the most ancient city, by which undoubtedly we must understand a great, or at least an old and celebrated city of Eastern Asia; and secondly, the origin of various hereditary classes, trades and arts; especially of those connected with the first knowledge and use of metals, and which doubtless hold the first place in the history of human arts and discoveries.

The music, which is attributed to those primitive ages, consisted probably rather in a medicinal or even magical use of that art, than in the beautiful system of later melody. Among the various works and instruments of smithcraft, and productions of art which the knowledge of mines and metals led to, the momentous discovery of the sword is particularly mention-

ed: by the brief enigmatic words which relate this discovery, it is difficult to know whether we are to understand them as the expression of a spirit of warlike enthusiasm, or of a renewed curse and dire wailing over all the succeeding centuries of hereditary murder, and progressive evil, under the divine permission. In all probability, these words refer to the origin of human sacrifices, emanating as they did from an infernal design, which we must consider as one of the strongest characteristics of this race; and those bloody sacrifices of the primitive world seem to have stamped on the rites and customs, as well as on the traditions and sentiments, of many nations a peculiar character of gloom and sadness. From this race were descended not only the inhabitants of cities, but nomade tribes, whereof many led, several thousand years ago, the same wandering life which they follow at the present day in the central parts of Eastern Asia; where vast remains of primitive mining operations are frequently found.

It is worthy of remark that, among one of these nations, the Ishudes, who inhabit a metallic mountain, we find, if we may so speak, an inverted history of Cain; mention is made of the enmity between the first two brothers of mankind, but all the circumstances are set forth in a party-spirit favourable to Cain. It is said that the elder brother acquired wealth by gold and

silver mines, but that the younger, becoming envious, drove him away, and forced him to take refuge in the East.*

So is the race of Cain and Cain's sons represented from its origin, as one attached to the arts, versed in the use of metals, disinclined to peace, and addicted to habits of warfare and violence, as again at a later period, it appears in scripture as a haughty and wicked race of giants.

On the other hand the peaceful race of Patriarchs who lived in a docile reverence of God and with a holy simplicity of manners, were descended from Seth. This second progenitor of mankind occupies a very prominent place even in the traditions of other nations, which make particular mention of the columns of Seth, signifying no doubt, in the language of remote antiquity, very ancient monuments, and, as it were, the stony records of sacred tradition. In general the first ten holy Progenitors or Patriarchs of the primitive world are mentioned under different names in the Sagas, not only of the Indians, but of several other Asiatic nations, though undoubtedly with important variations, and not without much poetical colouring. But as in these traditions we can clearly discern the same general traits of history, this diversity of

* See Ritter's Geography, 1st part, page 548,—1st Edition in German.

representation serves only to corroborate the main truth, and to illustrate it more fully and forcibly. The views, therefore, of those modern theologians, who represent the concurrent testimony of Gentile nations to the truths of primitive history as derived solely from the Mosaic narrative; and as it were transcribed from a genuine copy of our Bible, are equally narrow-minded and erroneous.

It would be more just and more consonant with the whole spirit of the primitive world, to assert, what indeed may be conceded with little difficulty, that these nations had received much from the primeval source of sacred tradition; but they regarded as a peculiar possession, and represented under peculiar forms, the common blessings of primitive revelation; and, instead of preserving in their integrity and purity the traditions and oracles of the primitive world, they overlaid them with poetical ornament, so that their whole traditions wear a fabulous aspect, until a nearer and more patient investigation clearly discovers in them the main features of historic truth.

Under these two different forms, therefore doth Tradition reveal to us the primitive world, or in other words, these are the two grand conditions of humanity which fill the records of primitive history. On the one hand, we see a race, lovers of peace, revering God, blessed with long life which they spend in patriarchal

simplicity and innocence, and still no strangers to deeper science, especially in all that relates to sacred tradition and inward contemplation, and transmitting their science to posterity in the old or symbolical writing, not in fragile volumes, but on durable monuments of stone. On the other hand, we behold a giant race of pretended demi-gods, proud, wicked and violent, or, as they are called in the later Sagas of the heroic times, the heaven-storming Titans.

This opposition, and this discord,—this hostile struggle between the two great divisions of the human race, forms the whole tenour of primitive history. When the moral harmony of man had once been deranged, and two opposite wills had sprung up within him, a divine will or a will seeking God, and a natural will or a will bent on sensible objects, passionate and ambitious, it is easy to conceive how mankind from their very origin must have diverged into two opposite paths.

Although this primitive division of mankind is now characterized as a difference of races, this is far from being merely the case; and that opposition which distracted the primitive world had far deeper causes than the mere distinction of a noble and a meaner race of men. It is somewhat in this manner a German scholar of the last generation, divided all nations now existing, or which have appeared within the later historical ages, into two classes; wherever

he imagined he found his favourite Celts and their descendants, he had not words strong enough to extol their romantic heroism; while he pursued with the most pitiless animosity, over the whole face of the earth, the unfortunate Monguls and all those he deduced from that stock. The struggle which divided the primitive world into two great parties arose far more from the opposition of feelings and of principles, than from difference of extraction. Great as is the interval which separates those ages and that world from our own, we can easily comprehend how this first mighty contest of nations, which history makes mention of, was in fact a struggle between two religious parties—two hostile sects, though indeed under far other forms, and in different relations from anything we witness in the present state of the world. It was, in one word, a contest between religion and impiety, conducted however on the mighty scale of the primitive world, and with all those gigantic powers which, according to ancient tradition, the first men possessed.*

* We must not suppose that the impiety of the Cainites was of a dogmatic kind. How could those primitive men, living so near the Fountain-head of revelation, conversing with those who had witnessed the rise and first development of man's marvellous history, endowed with that quick, intuitive science which, in the operations of external nature, revealed to them the agency of invisible spirits, witnessing the wondrous manifestations of God's love and power, the active ministry of his messengers of light;

The Greek Sagas represent this two-fold state of mankind in the primitive ante-historical ages in a very peculiar manner, as the gradual decline and corruption of successive generations; of this kind is the tradition of the ages of the world, whereof four or five are numbered. The Golden age of human felicity and the brazen age of all-ruling violence form the two essential terms of this tradition; and the intermediate ages are mere links, or points of transition to render the account more complete.

In the age of Saturn, the first race allied to the Gods lived in peace and happiness, and

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and, lastly, engaged themselves in a close communication with the infernal powers; how could they, I say, fall into atheism or any other species of speculative unbelief? Their impiety was of a more practical nature, displaying itself in a daring violation of the precepts of Heaven, and in the practice of a dark, mysterious magic. By the allurements of sense, and the fascination of their false science, they by degrees inveigled the great mass of mankind into their errors. Their vast powers, supported and strengthened by infernal agency, were calculated to introduce disorder and confusion in the economy of the moral and physical universe, and to let loose on this probationary world the science of the abyss. What do I say? The barrier between the visible and invisible world would have been broken down—Hell would have ruled the earth, had not the Almighty by an awful judgment buried the guilty race of men and their infernal knowledge in the waters of the Deluge. In the race of Cham, however, which perpetuated so many traditions of the early Cainites, some fragments of this ante-diluvian science of evil were preserved; and traces of it may still be discerned among the worshippers of Siva in India.—*Trans.*

were blessed with eternal youth; the earth poured forth her fruits and gifts in spontaneous abundance, and even the end of human life was not a real or painful death, but a gentle slumber into another and higher world of immortal spirits. But the next generation in the age of Silver is represented as wicked, devoid of reverence for the Gods, and giving loose to every turbulent passion. In the Brazen age this state of crime and disorder reached its highest pitch; lordly violence was the characteristic of the rude and gigantic Titans. Their arms were of copper and their instruments and utensils of brass, and even, in the construction of their edifices, they made use of copper; for as the old poet says, "black iron was not then known;" a circumstance which we must consider as strictly historical and as characteristic of the primitive nations. Between this and the following age, the better heroic race of poetical and even historic tradition is somewhat strangely introduced; and the whole series of generations is closed by the Iron age, the present and last period of the world—the term of man's progressive degeneracy.

This idea of a gradual and deeper degradation of human kind in each succeeding age appears at first sight not to accord very well with the testimony which sacred tradition furnishes on man's primitive state; for it represents the two races of the primitive world as cotemporary;

and indeed Seth, the progenitor of the better and nobler race of virtuous Patriarchs, was much younger than Cain. However, this contradiction is only apparent, if we reflect that it was the wicked and violent race which drew the other into its disorders, and that it was from this contamination a giant corruption sprang, which continually increased till, with a trifling exception, it pervaded the whole mass of mankind, and till the justice of God required the extirpation of degenerate humanity by one universal Flood.

In the Indian Sagas, the two races of the primitive world are represented in a state of continual or perpetually renewed warfare:— wicked nations of giants attack one or other of the two Brahminical races that descend from the virtuous Patriarchs; generous and divinely inspired heroes come to their assistance, and achieve many wonderful victories over these formidable foes. Such is the chief subject of all the great epic poems, and most ancient heroic Sagas of the Indians. In conformity to their present modes of thinking, and to their present constitution of society, they describe that fierce race of giants as a degraded caste of warriors; and they even give that denomination to many nations well known in later history, such as the Chinese, who bear the same name with them as with ourselves; the Pahlavas, who were a tribe of the ancient Medes and Persians, correspond-

ing to one of the two sacred languages of ancient Persia—the Pahlavi—and the Ionians or Yavanas according to the Asiatic denomination of the primitive Greeks. It may even be a matter of doubt, whether a regular caste of warriors, and an hereditary priesthood, according to the very ancient system of the hereditary division of classes, did not exist in the primitive world. However great may be the chronological confusion evinced in these poems and Sagas, however much, perhaps, of later history may have been interwoven into their ancient narratives, and however much of poetical embellishment and gigantic hyperbole the whole may have received, the leading features of historic truth may still be distinguished with certainty in the chequered tablet of tradition. For the hostility of two rival races in the primitive world, considered in itself, and independently of adventitious circumstances, must be looked upon as a positive and well authenticated fact. It might perhaps be proved before the tribunal of the severest historical criticism that poetry, that is to say, primitive historic tradition clothed with the ornaments of poetry—is often much nearer the truth in its representations of the primitive world than a dull Reason, that draws its estimate of probability from mere vulgar analogies, and which sees or affects to see every where only stupid and brutish savages.

A circumstance which we must never lose

sight of in this inquiry is that man did not suffer an immediate and entire loss of those high powers with which he had been endowed at his origin; but that the loss was gradual, and that for a long time yet he retained much of those powers, and that it was indeed the fearful abuse of those faculties in his last stage of degeneracy which produced that enormous licentiousness and wickedness spoken of in Holy Writ. And this is the real clue to the whole purport of primitive history, and to all that appears to us in it so full of enigma. This leading subject of primitive history—the struggle between two races, as it is the first great event in universal history, is also of the utmost importance in the investigation of the subsequent progress of nations; for this original contest and opposition among men, according to the two-fold direction of the will, a will conformable to that of God, and a will carnal, ambitious, and enslaved to Nature, often recurs, though on a lesser scale, in later history; or at least we can perceive something like a feeble reflection or a distant echo of this primal discord. And even at the present period, which is certainly much nearer to the last than to the first ages of the world, it would appear sometimes as if humanity were again destined, as at its origin, to be more and more separated into two parties, or two hostile divisions. And as the greatest of German philosophers, Leibnitz, admirably ob-

served that the sect of atheism would be the last in Christendom and in the world; so it is highly probable that this sect was the last in the primitive world, though stamped with the peculiar form which society at that period must have given to it, and on a scale of more gigantic magnitude.

On this important subject we have another observation to make, which refers more properly to an incidental circumstance in primitive history; for our great business is with the moral and intellectual progress of man. But even in respect to this more important object, the circumstance which we allude to should not be passed over in silence, as it tends to exemplify, illustrate and confirm the principle we have already had occasion to enforce; namely that we ought not to estimate by the narrow standard of present analogies and vulgar probabilities, all those facts in primitive nature and in primitive history which strike us as so strange, mysterious, and marvellous; provided they be really attested by ancient monuments and ancient tradition. We should ever bear in mind what a mighty wall of separation—what an impassable abyss—divides us from that remote world both of nature and of man. I refer to the unanimous testimony of ancient tradition respecting the gigantic forms of the first men, and their corresponding longevity, far exceeding, as it did, the present ordinary standard of the

duration of human life. With respect to the latter circumstance, indeed, there are so very many causes contributing to shorten considerably the length of human life, that we have completely lost every criterion by which to estimate its original duration; and it would be no slight problem for a profound physiological science to discover and explain from a deeper investigation of the internal constitution of the earth, or of astronomical influences, which are often susceptible of very minute applications, the primary cause of human longevity. By a simpler course of life and diet than the very artificial, unnatural and over-refined modes we follow, there are even at the present day numerous examples of a longevity far beyond the ordinary duration of human life. In India it is by no means uncommon to meet with men, especially in the Brahminical caste, more than a hundred years of age, and in the enjoyment of a robust, and even generative vigour of constitution. In the labouring class in Russia, whose mode of living is so simple, there are examples of men living to more than a hundred, a hundred and twenty, and even a hundred and fifty years of age; and although these instances form but rare exceptions, they are less uncommon there than in other European countries. There are even remarkable cases of old men, who after the entire loss of their teeth, have gained a complete new set as if their constitution had re-

ceived a new sap of life, and a principle of second growth. What, in the present physical degeneracy of mankind, forms but a rare exception, may originally have been the ordinary measure of the duration of human life, or at least may afford us some trace and indication of such a measure; more especially as other branches of natural science offer correspondent analogies. On the other side of that great wall of separation which divides us from the primitive ages—in that remote world so little known to us, a standard for the duration of human life very different from the present may have prevailed; and such an opinion is extremely probable, supported as it is by manifold testimony, and confirmed by the sacred record of man's divine origin.

In order better to understand and judge more correctly of the biblical number of years in human life, we ought never to overlook the very religious purport of the symbolical relation of numbers in the divine chronology. We should thus ever keep ourselves in readiness, as, according to the expression of Holy Writ, the hairs on a man's head are numbered—and how much more so the years of his life!—and as nothing here must be considered fortuitous, but all things as predetermined and regulated according to the views of Providence. Again, as the Scripture often mentions that, in the hidden decrees of his mercy, the Almighty hath graciously been pleased to shorten the duration of a determined space of time:—as, for example, a

course of irreversible suffering—or on the other hand, hath added a certain number of years to a determined period of grace, or prolonged the duration of a man's life; it behoves us to examine which of these two courses of divine favour be in any proposed case discoverable. In the extreme longevity of the holy Patriarchs of the primitive world—a longevity which as has been long proved and acknowledged, must be understood with reference only to the common astronomical years, the latter course of the divine goodness is discernible, and human life in those ages must be regarded as miraculously and supernaturally prolonged.* In the duration

* Noah affords another striking example of a wonderful prolongation or delay of time. The first nine Patriarchs of the primitive world propagated their race at the mean or average term of the hundredth year of their lives:—some near that period—others considerably earlier—and others again much later. But in the case of Noah we find that, to the mean term of a hundred years, four hundred were yet added; and that the Patriarch was five hundred years of age when he propagated his race. The high motive of this evidently supernatural delay may be traced to the fact that, although during this long prophetic period of preparation, the holy Seer well foresaw and felt firmly assured of the judgments impending over a degenerate and corrupt world, it was not equally clear to him that he was destined by God to be the second progenitor of mankind, and the renovator of the human race. But that great doom of the world, already foretold by Enoch, Noah probably expected to be its last end; and hence perhaps might consider the propagation of his race as not altogether conformable to the divine will, till the hidden decrees of the Eternal were more fully and more clearly revealed to him.

of Enoch's life, that holy prophet of the primitive world, whose translation was no death, but which, as the exit originally designed for man, should on that account be considered natural, the coincidence with the astronomical number of days in the sun's course round the earth is the more striking, as in the number of 365 years the number 33 is comprised as the root—a number which, in every respect and in the most various application, is discovered to be the primary number of the earth. For, with the slight difference of an unit, the number of 365 years corresponds to the sum of 333, with the addition of 33; but the number of days strictly comprised in those 365 years amounts to four times 33,000, with the addition of four times 330 days.

With regard to the gigantic stature attributed to the primitive race of men, by the authentic testimony of universal tradition; — a testimony which it is easy to distinguish from mere poetical embellishment or exaggeration—it is singular that those who are otherwise so disposed to apply the analogies of nature to the human species, should in this instance at least hold up the now ordinary scale of human bulk as the only standard of probability and certainty. The remains, more than once alluded to, of that primitive world which has perished, show that of the elephant, rhinoceros, and hippopotamus, the largest of all existing animals, there were

originally from twenty to thirty different tribes and species which are now extinct. Of the mammoth, that gigantic animal of antiquity, remains of which are found not only in Siberia and America, but in the different counties of Europe, near Paris, and even in this immediate neighbourhood, a great number of variousspecies have been also proved to have existed from the investigation of these antediluvian remains. Even of animals more familiar to us, bones and other remains have been discovered of a very unusual and truly gigantic size. Bulls' horns fastened together by a front-bone—antlers of stags, and elephants' tusks have been found, which prove those animals to have been of a dimension three, four, and even five times greater than they usually are at present. If in this elder period of organic nature, and of an animal kingdom which has become extinct, this gigantic style was so very prevalent, is it not reasonable to infer a similar analogy in the human species, so far at least as relates to their physical conformation, especially when this analogy is unanimously attested by the primitive Sagas and traditions of all nations?

As regards our sacred writings, I must observe that they tacitly imply and indeed pretty clearly attest the superior stature as well as great longevity of the first men; while, on the other hand, they represent the really gigantic structure of body as an organic degradation

and degeneracy, originating in the illicit union of the two primitive races—the Cainites and the Sethites—an union which was the source of universal corruption—as the all-destroying deluge was a mighty judgment brought about by the pride and wickedness of those giants, and was indeed against these principally directed.—Even at a later period, the Scripture speaks of some nations of giants, that, prior to the introduction of the Israelites into the promised land, occupied several of its provinces, such as Moab, Ammon, Bashan, and the country about the primitive city of giants—Hebron. These tribes are represented as celebrated for valour indeed, yet as inclined solely to warfare, wild, and wicked; and even the individual giants, that appear in the age of Moses and in the history of David, are described as peculiarly monstrous from their great corporal deformity. The only savage tribe now existing, (as far as our present knowledge of the globe can enable us to speak,) possessed of a very uncommon, enormous and almost gigantic stature — the Patagonians of America, are at the same time noted for their personal deformity. With them it is the upper part of the body that is of such a disproportionate length, for when seen on horseback they appear to be real giants, and hence they were so accounted at first. When on a closer inspection we see the whole length of their bodies in the attitude either of standing or of walking,

we perceive indeed they are of the very extraordinary height of from seven to eight feet, but not of that gigantic stature which the first impression led us to suppose, and which may so naturally have given rise to exaggerated accounts.

After all this, and what has been above stated, I need say no more than frankly declare that, as to these two points, the extraordinary longevity and gigantic stature of the first men,—I never could have the courage to raise a formal doubt against the plain declaration of Holy Writ, and the general testimony of primitive tradition. The full explanation, the more correct conception, and the perfect comprehension of these two facts are perhaps reserved for a later period, and the investigations of a deeper physical science.

There exist also monuments, or rather fragments of edifices, of the most primitive antiquity, which, as they are connected with the subject under discussion, are here deserving of a slight notice. I allude to those Cyclopean walls, which are to be found in several parts of Italy, and which those who have once seen will not easily forget, nor the singular stamp of antiquity they bear. In this very peculiar architecture, we see, instead of the stones of the usual cubical or oblong form, huge fragments of rock rudely cut into the shape of an irregular polygon, and skilfully enough joined together.

Even the great, and often admired, subterraneous aqueduct, or Cloaca of ancient Rome is considered as belonging to this cyclopean architecture, remains of which exist also near Argos and in several other parts of Greece. These edifices were certainly not built by the celebrated nations that at a later period occupied those countries; for even they regarded them as the work and production of a primitive and departed race of giants; and hence the name which these monuments received. When we consider how very imperfect must have been the instruments of those remote ages, and that they cannot be supposed to have possessed that knowledge in mechanics which the Egyptians, for instance, display in the erection of their obelisks; we can easily conceive how men were led to imagine that more vigorous arms and other powers, than those belonging to the present race of men, were necessary to the construction of those edifices of rock.

Thus have we now endeavoured to explain, as far as was necessary for our purpose, the origin of that dissension, which is inherent in human nature, and forms the basis of all history. We have in the next place sought to unfold and illustrate the universal tradition, which attests the hostility between the virtuous Patriarchs and the proud Titans of the primitive world, or the different and opposite spirit that characterized the two primitive races of mankind; assigning,

at the same time, to savage nations, or to the more degraded portions of human kind, their proper place in history—a place important undoubtedly, but still secondary in the great scheme of humanity.

These facts, too important to be passed over in silence, form the introduction and are, as it were, the porch to universal history, and to the civilization of the human species in the later historical ages. Now that we have seen mankind divided and split into a plurality of nations, our next task, in the period which follows, is to discover the most remarkable and most civilized nations, and to observe what peculiar form the Word, whether innate in man, or communicated to him—the word which may be considered as the essence of all the high prerogatives and characteristic qualities of man; to observe, we say, what peculiar form the word assumed among each of those nations, in their language and writing, in their religious traditions, their historical Sagas, their poetry, art, and science. In the account of ancient nations, we shall adopt the ethnographical mode of treating history; and it will be only in modern and more recent times that this method will gradually give place to the synchronical; and the reasons of this change will be suggested by the very nature of the subject. In this general survey, we must confine ourselves to those mighty and celebrated nations who have attained

to a high degree of intellectual excellence; and we shall select and briefly state remarkable traits or extraordinary historical facts illustrative of the manners, social institutions, political refinement, and even political history of every nation, worthy of occupying a place in this sketch, in order the better to mark the progress of the intellectual principle in the peculiar culture and modes of thinking of each. It is only at a later period that political history becomes the main object of attention, and almost the leading principle in the progressive march, and even the partial retrogressions of mankind.

In this general picture of the earliest development of the human mind, we can select such nations only as are sufficiently well known, or respecting whom the sources of information are now at least of easier access; for were we to comprehend in this general survey, nations with whom we were less perfectly acquainted, we should be led into minute and interminable researches, without, after all, perhaps, obtaining any new or satisfactory result for the principal object in view. In the first period of antiquity will figure the Chinese, the Indians and the Egyptians, besides the isolated, and the so-called chosen people of the Hebrews; and if I commence by the remotest of the civilized countries of Asia, China, I beg leave to premise that I mean to determine no question of priority as to the respective antiquity of those nations, or to

adjudge any preference to one or other amongst them. Indeed their own chronological accounts and pretensions, which often deserve the name of chronological fictions, turn out, on a closer inquiry, to be mere calculations of astronomical periods; and a sound historical criticism will not admit that they were originally meant to be chronological. Suffice it to say that the three nations we have mentioned belonged to the same period of the world, and attained to an equal, or a very similar, degree of moral and intellectual refinement; and so in respect to that higher object, the chronological dispute becomes unnecessary, or is, at least, of minor importance. Among those, however, who take an active part in these researches, a partiality for one or other of these nations, and for their respective antiquity easily springs up; for even objects the most remote will excite in the human breast the spirit of party. In order to keep as free as possible from prepossessions of this kind, I have adopted a species of geographical division of my subject, which, when I come to treat later of the different periods of modern history, will give place to a more chronological arrangement. I said a *species* of geographical division, for undoubtedly from the special nature of this historical enquiry, it must be supposed I shall take a different point of view in the geographical survey of the earth than ordinarily occurs in geographical investigations. The geographies

for common use properly take as their basis the present situation of the different states and kingdoms now in existence. But a more scientific geography adopts the direction of mountains, and the course of rivers, the vallies produced by the former, and the space occupied by the waters of the latter, as the leading clue to the division and arrangement of the earth. Thus in the philosophy of history the series of the principal civilized states will form a high, commanding chain; and the philosophic historian will have to follow from east to west, or in any other direction that history may point out, not merely rivers transporting articles of commerce, but the mighty stream of traditions and doctrines which has traversed and fertilized the world.

As the individuals who can be termed historical, form but rare exceptions among mankind, so in the whole circumference of the globe, there are only a certain number of nations that occupy an important and really historical place in the annals of civilization. By far the greater part of the inhabited or habitable globe, however rich and ample a field it may offer to the investigations of the naturalist, cannot be included in this class, or has not attained to this degree of eminence. In the whole continent of Africa there is, besides Egypt, only the northern coast stretching along the Mediterranean, that is at all connected with the history and intellectual

progress of the civilized world. The other coasts of Africa, including its southernmost cape, furnish points of importance to commerce, navigation, and even some attempts at colonization; while the interior parts of this continent, still so little known, possess much to excite the attention and wonder of the naturalist; but beyond this, its maritime as well as central regions, cannot be said to occupy a place in the intellectual history, or in the moral progress, of our species. It is only since it has formed a province of the Russian empire that the vast territory of Northern Asia has become known to us, and has been, as it were, newly discovered. From central and eastern Asia, from the south of Tartary and the north of China, many mighty and conquering nations have issued, that have spread the terror of their arms over the face of civilization, as far as the frontiers of Europe.

But, in the march and development of the human mind, these nations are far from occupying the same eminent station. In this respect, also, the fifth continent of the globe, Polynesia — though nearly equal to Europe in extent, counts as nought. Even America, the largest of those continents, occupies here a comparatively subordinate rank; and it is only in latter ages, and since its discovery, that it can be said to belong to history. Since that period, indeed, the inhabitants of this portion of the world have adopted, for the most part, the language, the

manners, the modes of thinking, and the political Institutions of Europe; for the still subsisting remnant of its ancient savages is very inconsiderable: so that America may be regarded as a remote dependency, and, as it were, a continuation of old Europe on the other side of the Atlantic. Great as the re-action may be, which this second Europe, sprung up in the solitudes of the new world, has during the last fifty years exerted on its mother-continent, still as this influence forms a part but of very recent history, it is only in very modern times that America has obtained any historical weight and importance.

Even in its natural configuration, the new world is more widely different from the old, than the principal parts of the latter are from each other. As in comparing the Northern extremity of the earth with its Southern or aqueous extremity, we observe a striking disparity, and almost complete opposition between the two; so we shall find this to be the case, if, in advancing in the opposite direction from east to west, we divide the whole surface of the earth into two equal parts. On one hand that more important division of the earth, extending from the Western coast of Africa to the Eastern coast of Asia, comprises the three ancient continents, which, from the upper to the middle part, occupy almost the whole space of this half of the globe. Here is the greatest

quantity of land, and the animal kingdom, too, is on a more large and magnificent scale. It is only at the Southern extremity of this hemisphere that sea and water are predominant; and here a continuous chain of islands from the southernmost point of Asia reaches to the fifth and last portion of the globe—Australia, making it a sort of Asiatic dependency. In the American hemisphere, the element of water is predominant, not only at the Southern extremity, but towards the middle; for, large as America may be, it can bear no comparison with the other continents in respect to extent of surface. Our hemisphere is more remarkable even for extent of population than for the quantity of land. Here indeed is the chief seat of population, and the principal theatre of human history and human civilization.

The entire population of America, which, as it is for the most part of European extraction, is better known to us than that of many countries more contiguous—the entire population of America at the highest computation of the whole number of inhabitants on the globe, forms but a thirtieth part, and at the lowest computation, not a four-and-twentieth part of the whole. Widely extended as this thinly peopled continent is, the whole number of its inhabitants scarcely exceeds the population of a single great European state, such as either France or Germany, whose population, indeed, it about

equals. Vegetation, indeed, is most rich and luxuriant in America; but the two most generous plants reared by human culture, and which are so closely connected with the primitive history of man—corn and the vine—were originally unknown in this quarter of the world. In the animal kingdom, America is far inferior to the other and more ancient continents of the globe. Many of the noblest and most beautiful species of animals did not exist there originally; and others again were found most unseemly in form, and most degenerate in nature. Some species of animals indigenous to that continent form but a feeble compensation for the absence of others, the most useful and most necessary for the purposes of husbandry and the domestic uses of man. We may boldly lay it down as a general proposition not to be taxed with error or exaggeration, that in the new hemisphere, vegetation is predominant, while in the old, animal force preponderates, and is more fully developed. This superiority is apparent not only in the comparative extent of population, but in the organic structure of the human form. Even the African tribes are far superior in bodily strength and agility to the aboriginal natives of America; and in point of longevity and fecundity, the latter are not to be compared with the Malayan race, and the Mongul tribes in the central or North-eastern parts of Asia, and in Southern Tartary, races with whom, in

other respects, they seem to bear some analogy.

As the American continent, in other respects so incomplete, is mostly separated from all the others; and its form is more simple and less complex than that of the ancient divisions of the globe, it well deserves our consideration in that point of view; and it may perhaps furnish the general type and true geographical outline of a continent in its natural state. A narrow isthmus connects the upper half, stretching in a widely extended tract towards the North Pole, and the inferior part, with its Southern peak; and thus both form, according to general impression but one and the same continent; and so prove, in fact, how totally the Northern and Southern parts of a continent may differ. That now in the period when the Euxine was still united to the Caspian, when the White sea stretched farther into land, and the Ural mountains formed an island, or were surrounded to the North and South by the sea, Asia and Europe were probably separated towards the North, is a point to which we have already had occasion to allude. But if, on the one hand, Europe were separated from Asia, it might on the other have been easily joined to Africa by an isthmus, where it is now divided from it by a straight, and so have formed with it one connected continent; in the same way as Australia is united with Asia, if at least we consider the long chain of islands between them as one un-

broken continuity. Then in truth there would have been but three continents of a form similar to the above-mentioned one of America; except that the two nobler continents closely entangled with one another would not on that account have so well preserved the original conformation. That it is on the whole more correct, and more consonant with nature, as well as with theory, to suppose the existence of only three original portions of the globe, might be shown by much additional evidence.

But, laying aside these geological facts and observations, ideas and conjectures, the philosophic historian can reckon over the whole surface of the globe but fifteen historical and important civilized countries, of greater or less extent, which can form the subject, and furnish the geographical outline of his remarks. This historical chain of lands, or this stream of historical nations from the south-east of Asia to the Northern and Western extremities of Europe, forms a tract, through both continents, which though of considerable breadth, is not, in proportion to the extent of these continents, of very great magnitude, and which may be divided into three classes, coinciding chronologically in their several periods of historical glory and development with the great eras or sections of universal history from the primitive ages down to the present times. In the first class of these mighty and celebrated civilized

countries, I would place the three great magnificent regions in Eastern and Southern Asia, China, India, between which the ancient Bactriana forms a point of transition and connecting link—and lastly Persia. In a more westerly and somewhat more northerly direction than the three countries just named, the second or middle class is composed of four or five regions remarkable for extent and beauty, and above all for their historical importance and celebrity. First of all, there is that middle country of Western Asia above-mentioned, which is situate near two great streams—the Tigris and the Euphrates, and bounded by four inland seas, the Persian and Arabian gulfs, and the Caspian and Mediterranean seas. Upon this midland country of ancient history, in every respect so worthy of notice, I have but one observation to add, that in this great series of civilized countries it occupies nearly the middle place; for the Southern extremity of India is about as far removed from it as, in the opposite direction, the North of Scotland. And the Eastern part of China is not much more distant from this region than in the opposite quarter the Western coast of the Hesperian Peninsula. Next must be included in this class the circumjacent countries, Arabia, Egypt, and Asia Minor, together with the Caucasian regions.

As in the flourishing period of her ancient history, Greece was in every way far more

closely connected with Asia Minor, Phœnicia, and Egypt, than with the countries of Europe, she also must be comprised in this division of Central Asia. On the other hand, there is no country in Europe which, considered in itself, bears so strongly the distinctive geographical configuration peculiar to the European continent. This peculiar configuration of Europe, so well adapted to the purposes of settlement, and to the progress of civilization, consists in this—that in no other continent does the same given space of territory present to the sea so extensive and diversified a line of coast, and furnish it with so many streams, great and small, as Europe shut in, as it is, between two inland seas, and the great ocean, and which runs out into so many great and commodiously situated Peninsulas, and possesses large, magnificent, and, in part, very anciently and highly civilized islands, like Sicily and the British Isles. What Europe is in a large way, Greece is in a small—a region of coasts, islands and peninsulas. Belonging more to one continent in its natural conformation, and to the other by its historical connexion, Greece forms the point of transition and the intermediate link between Asia and Europe.

The other six or seven principal countries in Europe, taken according to a strict geographical classification, and without paying attention to the political variations of territory, whether in anti-

quity, the middle ages, or modern times, form the members of the third class. These are first the two beautiful peninsulas, Italy and Spain; next France on the North and South washed by two different seas, and towards the North, jutting out into a by no means inconsiderable peninsula—further on, the British isles, the ancient Germany with its Northern coast stretching along two seas, to which must be annexed from the ancient consanguinity of their inhabitants, the Cimbric and Scandinavian islands and peninsulas; lastly, the vast Sarmatia, towards the North and East extending far into Asia, in the wide tract from the Euxine to the Frozen sea. From Sarmatia, however, must be separated, on account of their natural situation, the great Danubian countries, extending from the South of the Carpathian mountains, down to the other mountainous chain northward of Greece—such as the ancient Illyricum, Pannonia and Dacia —regions which, in a strict geographical point of view, must be regarded as forming a distinct class. In an historical point of view, the whole Northern coast of Africa, stretching along the Mediterranean, should be included in this division of European countries, not only from that early commercial and colonial connexion, established in the time of the Carthaginian republic, and in the first period of the Roman wars and conquests; but from the prevalence in that country, down to the fourth and fifth centuries,

of European manners, language and refinement. Even during the existence of the Saracenic empire, a very close intercourse subsisted for many centuries between this coast and Spain.

Such, according to a general geographical survey of the globe, would be the historical land-chart of civilization, if I may so express myself, which forms the grand outline I must steadily keep in view, in the following sketch of nations, in which I will endeavour to explain with the utmost clearness and precision, and point out closely in all its particular bearings, the principle laid down in this work respecting the internal Word, as the essential characteristic of man.

END OF LECTURE II.

LECTURE III.

Of the constitution of the Chinese Empire—the moral and political condition of China—the character of Chinese intellect and Chinese science.

"MAN and the earth,"—this has been the subject of our previous disquisitions, and might serve as the superscription to this first portion of the work. In the second part, comprised in the four or five following lectures, the subject discussed is sacred Tradition, according to the peculiar form which it assumed among each of the great and most remarkable nations in primitive antiquity, and as it is known from the visible and universally scattered traces of a divine Revelation. It will be our duty to trace, with a discriminating eye, the various course which, in the lapse of ages, this sacred tradition followed among each of those nations; and at the same time to point out, as far as the subject

will admit of historical proof, the one common source whence, as from a centre, issued those different streams of tradition to diffuse throughout all the regions of the earth fertility and life, or to be lost and dried up in the sterile sands of human error. It will be also our task more accurately to define the share allotted to each of those leading nations in divine truth, or the heritage of higher knowledge which had been imparted to them. Closely connected with this subject, is the designation of the internal Word, constituting as it does the distinguishing mark and intellectual being of man and mankind; and which, as it has been variously manifested and developed in the language, writings, Sagas, history, art and science—in the faith, the life and modes of thinking of each of those nations, will be described in its most essential traits.

I shall commence with the Chinese Empire, because, among the fifteen historical countries included in the line of civilization we have drawn above, it occupies the extreme point of Eastern Asia. The names of East and West are indeed purely relative; and have not the same permanent and definite signification as the North or South pole in every portion of the globe China lies to the west of Peru; and to North America, or Brazil, Europe forms the east or north-east point. We still however adhere to common speech, purely relative as it is, and take our point of view from this Asiatic and Euro-

pean hemisphere, in which we dwell. If we would extend in a westerly direction and to the great continent of America, which is more and more assuming an important place in the history of the world, that series of great and civilized states, stretching from the south-east to the north-west in our mightier, more celebrated, and earlier civilized hemisphere, we might add to the before-mentioned fifteen ancient and modern countries three young or rising states in the new world, which, springing in a three-fold division from British, Spanish, and Portuguese extraction, would constitute the most recent, or last historical links in this chain of communities.

The Chinese empire is the largest of all the Monarchies now existing on the earth, and even in this respect may well challenge the attention of the historical enquirer. This empire is not absolutely the greatest in territorial extent, though even in this respect it is scarcely inferior to the greatest; but in point of population it is in all probability the first. Spain, if we could now include in the number of her possessions her American colonies, would exceed all empires in extent. The same may be said of Russia, with her annexed colonies, and boundless provinces in the north of Asia. But, great as the population of this Empire may be, when considered in itself and relatively to the other European states, it can sustain no

comparison with that of China. England with the East Indies and her colonial possessions in the three divisions of the globe, Polynesia, Africa, and America, has indeed a very wide extent, and, perhaps, when we include the hundred and ten millions that own her sway in India, comes the nearest in point of population to China. Of the amount of the Chinese population, which is not with certainty known, that of India may furnish a criterion for a conjectural and probable estimate. The British ambassador, Lord Macartney received an official document, in which the whole population of China was computed at the monstrous amount of 330 millions. „Even if the Chinese possessed those exact statistical estimates we have in Europe, it would still be a matter of doubt how far in such cases we could confide in their veracity, especially in their relations with foreigners and Europeans. In another and somewhat earlier statistical work, composed towards the close of the 18th century, the population of this empire is estimated at 147 millions; and the very incredible statement is added, that a hundred and fifty years before, or about the middle of the 17th century, the Chinese population amounted only to 27 millions and a half. This rapid rise, or rather this prodigious stride in the numbers of a people, would be in utter opposition to all principles and observations on the growth and progressive increase of popula-

tion, even in the most civilized countries. Thus even the statistical estimates of the Chinese furnish us with no certain information on this subject. However as this vast region is every where intersected by navigable rivers and canals, every where studded with large and highly populous cities, and enjoys a climate as genial, or even still more genial, and certainly far more salubrious than that of India; as, like the latter country, it every where presents to the eye the richest culture, and is in all appearance as much peopled, or over-peopled, we may take India, whose total population is not near included in the 110 millions under British rule, as furnishing a pretty accurate standard for the computation of the Chinese population. Now, when we reflect that even the proper China is larger than the whole western peninsula of India, and that the vast countries dependent on China, such as Thibet and southern Tartary are very populous, the conjectural calculation of the English writer, from whom I have taken these critical remarks on the early estimates of Chinese population, and who reckons it at 150 millions, may be regarded as a very moderate computation, and may with perfect safety, be considerably raised. Thus then the Chinese population is nearly as large as the whole population of Europe, and constitutes, if not a fourth, at least a fifth, of the total population of the globe.

I permit myself to indulge in cursory comparisons of this kind, and for the reason that the history of civilization, which forms the basis, and as it were the outward body, of the philosophy of history, which should be the inner and higher sense of the whole, is deeply interested in all that refers to the general condition of humanity. And such an interest, which does not of itself lie in mere statistical calculations, but in the outward condition of mankind, as the symbol of its inward state, may very well attach to comparisons of this nature.

The interest, however, which the philosophic historian should take in all that relates to humanity in general, and to the various nations of the earth, ought not to be regulated by the false standard of an indiscriminate equality, that would consider all nations of equal importance, and pay equal attention to all without distinction. This would indeed betray an indifference to, or at least ignorance of, the higher principle implanted in the human breast. But this interest should be measured not merely by the degree of population in a state, or by geographical extent of territory, or by external power, but by population, territory and power combined—by moral worth and intellectual pre-eminence, by the scale of civilization to which the nation has attained. The Tongoosses, though a very widely diffused race, the Calmucks, though, compared with the other na-

tions of central Asia, they have much to claim our attention, cannot certainly excite equal interest, or hold as high a place in the history of human civilization, as the Greeks or the Egyptians; though the territory of Egypt itself is certainly not particularly large, nor according to our customary standard of population, were its inhabitants in all probability ever very numerous. In the same way, the Empire of the Moguls, which embraced China itself, has not the same high interest and importance in our eyes as the Roman Empire either in its rise or in its fall. Writers on universal history have not however always avoided this fault, and have been too much disposed to place all nations on the same historical footing,—on the false level of an indiscriminate equality; and to regard humanity in a mere physical point of view, and according to the natural classification of tribes and races. In these sketches of history, the high and the noble is often ranked with the low and the vulgar, and neither what is truly great, nor what is of lesser importance, (for this, too, should not be overlooked) has its due place in these portraits of mankind.

A numerous, or even excessive population is undoubtedly an essential element of political power in a state; but it is not the only, nor in any respect, the principal symptom or indication of the civilization of a country. It is only

in regard to civilization that the population of China deserves our consideration. Although in these latter times, when Europe by her political ascendency over the other parts of the world has proved the high pre-eminence of her arts and civilization; England and Russia have become the immediate neighbours of China towards the north and west; still these territorial relations affect not the rest of Europe; and China, when we leave out of consideration its very important commerce, cannot certainly be accounted a political power in the general system. Even in ancient, as well as in modern times, China never figured in the history of Western Asia or Europe, and had no connection whatever with their inhabitants; but this great country has ever stood apart, like a world within itself, in the remote, unknown Eastern Asia. Hence the earlier writers on universal history have taken little or no notice of this great Empire, shut out as it was from the confined horizon of their views. And this was natural, when we consider that the conquests and expeditions of the Asiatic nations were considered by these writers as subjects of the greatest weight and importance. No conquerors have ever marched from China into Western Asia, like Xerxes, for instance, who passed from the interior of Persia to Athens; or Alexander the Great, who extended his victorious march from his small paternal province of

Macedon, to beyond the Indus, and almost to the borders of the Ganges, though the latter river, he was in despite of all his efforts, unable to reach. But the great victorious expeditions have proceeded not from China, but from central Asia, and the nations of Tartary, who have invaded China itself; though in these invasions the manners, mind, and civilization of the Chinese have evinced their power, as their Tartar conquerors, in the earliest as in the latest times, have after a few generations, invariably conformed to the manners and civilization of the conquered nation, and become more or less Chinese.

Not only the great population and flourishing agriculture of this fruitful country, but the cultivation of silk, for which it has been celebrated from all antiquity; the culture of the tea-plant, which forms such an important article of European trade; as well as the knowledge of several most useful medicinal productions of nature; and unique and, in their way, excellent products of industry and manufacture; prove the very high degree of civilization which this people has attained to. And how should not that people be entitled to a high or one of the highest places among civilized nations, which had known, many centuries before Europe, the art of printing, gun-powder, and the magnet—those three so highly celebrated and valuable discoveries of European skill? Instead of

the regular art of printing with transposeable letters, which would not suit the Chinese system of writing, this people make use of a species of lithography, which, to all essential purposes is the same, and attended with the same effects. Gunpowder serves in China, as it did in Europe in the infancy of the discovery, rather for amusement and for fire-works, than for the more serious purpose of warlike fortification and conquest: and though this people are acquainted with the magnetic needle, they have never made a like extended application of its powers, and never employ it either in a confined river and coasting navigation, or on the wide ocean, on which they never venture.

The Chinese are remarkable too for the utmost polish and refinement of manners, and even for a fastidious urbanity and a love of stately ceremonial. In many respects indeed their politeness and refinement almost equal those of European nations, or at least are very superior to what we usually designate by the term of oriental manners—a term which in our sense can apply only to the more contiguous Mahometan countries of the Levant. Of this assertion we may find a sufficient proof in any single tale that pourtrays the present Chinese life and manners, in the novel, for instance, translated by M. Remusat.* In their present manners and fashions, how-

* Entitled Ju-Kiao-li, or the Cousins.

ever, there are many things utterly at variance with European taste and feelings; I need only mention the custom of the dignitaries, functionaries, and men of letters, letting their nails grow to the length of birds' claws, and that other custom in women of rank, of compressing their feet to a most artificial diminutiveness. Both customs, according to the recent account of a very intelligent Englishman, serve to mark and distinguish the upper class; for the former renders the men totally incapable of hard or manual labour, and the latter impedes the women of rank in walking, or at least gives them a mincing gait, and a languid, delicate and interesting air. These minute traits of manners should not be overlooked in the general sketch of this nation, for they perfectly correspond to many other characteristic marks and indications of unnatural stiffness, childish vanity, and exaggerated refinement, which we meet with in the more important province of its intellectual exertions. Even in the basis of all intellectual culture, the language, or rather the writing of the Chinese, this character of refinement pushed beyond all bounds and all conception is visible, while on the other hand it is coupled with great intellectual poverty and jejuneness. In a language where there are not much more than three hundred, not near four hundred, and (according to the most recent critical investigation,) only 272 monosyllabic primitive

roots without any kind of grammar; where the not merely various but utterly unconnected significations of one and the same word are marked in the first place by a varying modulation of the voice, according to a fourfold method of accentuation; in the next place, and chiefly by the written characters, which amount to the prodigious number of eighty thousand; while the Egyptian hieroglyphs do not exceed the number of eight hundred; and this Chinese system of writing is the most artificial in the whole world. An inference which is not invalidated by the fact that, out of that great number of all actual or possible written characters, but a fourth part perhaps is really in use, and a still less portion is necessary to be learned. As the meaning, especially of more complex notions and abstract ideas can be fully fixed and accurately determined only by such artificial ciphers; the language is far more dependent on these written characters than on living sound; for one and the same sound may often be designated by 160 different characters, and have as many significations. It not rarely occurs that Chinese, when they do not very well understand each other in conversation, have recourse to writing, and by copying down these ciphers are enabled to divine each other's meaning, and become mutually intelligible. To comprehend rightly this immeasurable chaos of originally symbolic, but now merely conventional

signs—in other words, to be able to read and write, though this science involves great and difficult problems even for the most practised, constitutes the real subject and purport of the scientific education of a Chinese. Indeed it furnishes labour sufficient to fill up the life of man, for even the European scholars, who have engaged in this study, find it a matter of no small difficulty to devise a system whereby a dictionary, or rather a systematic catalogue of all these written characters may be composed, to serve as a fit guide on this ocean of Chinese signs.—But we shall have again occasion to recur to this subject; and indeed it is only in connexion with the peculiar bearings of the Chinese mind this writing system can be properly explained and understood in its true meaning, or rather its meaningless construction and elaborateness.

Of the external civilization of China, we have a striking proof and a standing monument in the construction of so many canals that intersect the whole country, and in every thing connected therewith. As the extraordinary fertility of the soil is produced by the many rivers of greater or less magnitude that intersect the country, but which at the same time threaten the flat plains with inundation, it is the first object and most important care of government, to avert the danger of such inundations, to distribute the fertilizing waters in equal abundance over the whole country, and thus by means of canals,

to maintain in all parts the communication by water which is at the same time of equal benefit and importance to industry and internal commerce. In no civilized state are establishments of this kind so extensively diffused and brought to so high a state of perfection as in China. The great imperial canal which extends to the length of 120 geographical leagues, has, it is said, no parallel on the earth. Although the construction of canals, and all the regulations on water-carriage could have attained by degrees only to their present state of perfection, still this alone would prove the very early attention which this people had bestowed on the arts of civilized life. Mention is often made of them in the old Chinese histories and imperial annals; and the canals of China, like the Nile in Egypt, were ever the objects of most anxious solicitude to the government. These annals, whenever they have occasion to speak of those great inundations and destructive floods, which are of such frequent occurrence in Chinese history, invariably represent the attention bestowed on water-courses and water-regulations, as the most certain mark of a wise, benevolent, and provident administration. On the other hand the neglect of this most important of administrative concerns is ever regarded as the proof of a wicked, reckless and unfortunate reign; and in these histories some great calamity, or even violent catastrophe, is sure to follow, like

a stroke of divine vengeance, on this unpardonable neglect of duty. Together with the imperial canal, the great Chinese wall, which extends on the Northern frontier of China proper, to the length of 150 geographical leagues, is another no less important, and still standing monument of the comparatively high civilization which this country had very early attained. Such is the height and thickness of this wall, that it has been calculated that its cubic contents exceed all the mass of stone employed in all the buildings in England and Scotland; or again that the same materials would serve to construct a wall of ordinary height and moderate thickness round the whole earth. This great wall of China may be considered as a characteristic, and as it were a symbol of the seclusive spirit and aversion to every thing foreign in person, manners and modes of thinking which distinguish the Chinese state. This spirit, however has been as little able as the great wall itself, to defend China against foreign conquests, or even against the introduction of foreign sects. This wall, which was built about two centuries before the Christian era, is a historical monument, which furnishes far stronger proof than all the dubious accounts of the old annals that even in ancient times, and long before the conquest of the Monguls, and the establishment of the present dynasty of Mantchou Tartars, the empire had been often

conquered, or at least was constantly exposed to the invasions of the Tartar tribes of the North.

The long succession of the different native dynasties of China, Tchin, Han, Tang, and Sung, down to the Monguls, which fills the diffuse annals of the empire, furnishes few important data on the intellectual progress of the Chinese; and every thing of importance to the object of our present inquiries, that can be gathered out of the mass of political history, may be reduced to a very few plain facts. The English writer, whom we have already cited, though otherwise inclined to a certain degree of scepticism in his views, fixes the commencement of the historical ages of authentic history in the ancient dynasty of Chow, eleven hundred years before the Christian era. The first fact of importance, as regards the moral and intellectual civilization of China, is that this country was originally divided into many small principalities, and, under petty sovereigns, whose power was more limited, enjoyed a greater share of liberty; and that it was formed into a great and absolute monarchy only two hundred years before Christ. The general burning of the books, of which more particular mention will be presently made, as well as the erection of the great wall, are attributed to the first general Emperor of all China, Chi-hoangti; in whose reign, too, Japan became a Chinese colony, or received from

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China a political establishment. At a still later period, as in the fifth century of our era, and again at the time of the Mogul conquest under Zingis Khan, China was divided into two kingdoms, a northern and a southern. But there is another fact already mentioned that throws still stronger light on the high civilization of China —it is that at every period, when this empire has been conquered by the Moguls and Tartars, the conquerors, overcome in their turn by the ascendancy of Chinese civilization, have, within a short time, invariably adopted the manners, laws, and even language of China, and thus its institutions have remained, on the whole, unaltered. But here is a circumstance in Chinese history particularly worthy of our attention. In no state in the world do we see such an entire, absolute, and rigid monarchical unity as in that of China, especially under its ancient form; although this government is more limited by laws and manners, and is by no means of that arbitrary and despotic character which we are wont to attribute to the more modern oriental states. In China, before the introduction of the Indian religion of Buddha, there was not even a distinct sacerdotal class—there is no nobility, no hereditary class with hereditary rights—education, and employment in the service of the state, form the only marks of distinction; and the men of letters and government functionaries are blended together in the single class of Man-

darins; but the state is all in all. However, this absolute monarchical system has not conduced to the peace, stability, and permanent prosperity of the state, for the whole history of China, from beginning to end, displays one continued series of seditions, usurpations, anarchy, changes of dynasty, and other violent revolutions and catastrophes. This is proved by the bare statement of facts, though the official language of the Imperial annals ever concedes the final triumph to the monarchical principle.

The same violent revolutions occurred in the department of science and of public doctrines, as in the instance already cited of the general burning of the books by order of the first general Emperor;" when the men of letters, or at least a party of them, were persecuted, and four hundred and sixty followers of Confucius burnt. This act of tyranny undoubtedly supposes a very violent contest between factions—an important political struggle between hostile sects, and a mighty revolution in the intellectual world. At the same time, too, a favourite of this tyrannical prince introduced a new system of writing, which has led to the greatest confusion, even in subsequent ages. Such an intellectual revolution is doubtless evident on the introduction of the Indian religion of Buddha, or Fo (according to the Chinese appellation), which took place precisely three-and-

thirty years after the foundation of christianity. The conquest of China by the Moguls, under Zingis Khan, occurred at the same time that their expeditions towards the opposite quarter of Europe spread terror and desolation over Russia and Poland, as far as the confines of Silesia. This conquest produced a re-action, and a popular revolution, conducted by a common citizen of China, by name Chow, restored the Empire; this citizen afterwards ascended the throne, and became the founder of a new Chinese dynasty. The Emperors of the present dynasty of Mantchew Tartars, that has now governed China since the middle of the 17th century, are distinguished for their attachment to the old customs and institutions of China, and even to its language and science; and their elevation to the throne has given rise to many great scientific enterprises, and has been singularly favourable to the investigations of those European scholars whose object it is to make us better acquainted with China. But at the moment I am speaking, a great rebellion has broken out in the northern part of the kingdom, and in the opposite extremity the christians are exposed to a more than ordinary persecution.

These few leading incidents in Chinese history may suffice to make known the principal epochs in the intellectual progress and civilization of this people. As the constitution and

development of the human mind are in each of those ancient nations closely connected with the nature of their language, and even sometimes (as in the case of the Chinese) with their system of writing, the language of the latter people, being on account of its amazing copiousness less fit for conversation than for writing, I shall now make a few remarks on the very artificial mode of Chinese writing, which is perfectly unique in its kind; but I shall confine my observations to its general character, and shall forbear entering into the vast labyrinth of the 80,000 cipher-signs of speech, and all the problems and difficulties which they involve. The Chinese writing was undoubtedly in its origin symbolical; though the rude marks of those primitive symbols can now scarcely be discerned in the enigmatical abbreviations, and in the complex combinations of the characters at present in use. It is no slight problem even for the learned of China to reduce with any degree of certainty the boundless quantity of their written characters to their simple elements and primitive roots; in this, however, they have succeeded, and have shown that all these elements are to be found in the 214 symbols, or keys of writing as they call them. The Chinese characters of the primitive ages comprise only such representations indicated by a few rude strokes, of those first simple objects which surround man while living in the most simple state of society—such

as the sun and moon, the most familiar animals, the common plants, the instruments of human labour, weapons, and the different parts of human dwellings. This is the same rude symbolical writing which we find among other uncivilized nations, the Americans for example, and among these, the Mexicans in particular.

The celebrated French orientalist, Abel Remusat, who in our times has infused a new life into the study of Chinese literature, and especially thrown on the whole subject a much greater degree of clearness than originally belonged to it, has, in his examination of this first very meagre outline of the infant civilization of China, wherein he discovers the then very contracted circle of Chinese ideas, passed many intellectual observations, and drawn many historical deductions. And if, as he conjectures, the discovery of Chinese writing must date its origin from four thousand years back, this would bring it within three or four generations from the Deluge, according to the vulgar era — an estimate which certainly is not exaggerated. If this European scholar, intimately conversant as he is with Chinese antiquities and science, is at a loss adequately to describe his astonishment at the extreme poverty of these first symbols of Chinese writing, so no one, doubtless, possesses in a higher degree than himsslf all the necessary attainments to enable him to appreciate the immeasurable distance between this

first extreme jejuneness of ideas and the boundless wealth displayed in the later, artificial and complex writing of the Chinese.

But when, among other things, he calls our attention to the fact that, in this primitive writing, even the sign or symbol of a priest is wanting,—a symbol which together with the class itself must exist among the very rudest nations—I cannot concur in the truth of the remark; for he himself adduces, among other characters, one which must represent a magician. Now among the heathen nations of the primitive age, the one personage was certainly identical with the other, as even among the Cainites was very probably the case. Even the combination of several of those simple characters, which generally serves to denote the more abstract ideas, seems often, or at least originally not to have been regulated by any profound principle of symbolism, but to have arisen merely out of the vulgar perceptions or impressions of every-day life. For instance, the character denoting happiness is composed of two signs, of which one represents an open mouth, and the other a hand full of rice, or rice by itself. Here we see no allusion is made to any very lofty or chimerical idea of happiness, or to any mystic or spiritual conception of the same subject; but, as this written-character well evinces, the Chinese notion of happiness is simply represented by a mouth filled and saturated with

good rice. Another example of nearly the same kind is given by Remusat with something of shyness and reserve;—the character designating woman, when doubled, signifies strife and contention, and when tripled, immoral and disorderly conduct. How widely removed are all these coarse and trivial combinations of ideas from an exquisite sense—a deep symbolism of Nature—from those spiritual emblems in the Egyptian hieroglyphics, so far as they have been deciphered; although these emblems may have been, and were in fact applied to the purpose of alphabetic usage. In the hieroglyphics there is, beside the bare literal meaning, a high symbolical inspiration, like a soul of life—like the breathing of a high in-dwelling spirit,—a deeply felt significancy—a lofty and beautiful design apparent through the dead character denoting any particular name or fact.*

But independently of this boundless chaos of written-characters, the Chinese undoubtedly possess a system of scientific symbols, and symbolical signs, which constitute the purport of the most ancient of their sacred books—the I—King—which signifies the book of unity, or,

* There are some exceptions to the truth of these remarks respecting Chinese symbols. For instance, the idea of "dispersion" is expressed in the Chinese writing by the sign of *a tower*. What a beautiful and profound allusion to the great events of primitive history!—*Trans.*

as others explain it, the book of changes; and either name will agree with the meaning of those symbols which, when rightly understood, and conceived in the spirit of early antiquity, will appear to be of a very remarkable and scientific nature. There are only two primary figures or lines, from which proceed originally the four symbols and the eight koua or combinations representing nature, which form the basis of the high Chinese philosophy. These first two primary principles are a straight, unbroken line, and a line broken or divided into two. If these first simple elements are doubled: namely—two straight lines put under each other like our arithmetical sign of equation, and two broken or divided lines also put together, the different lines are formed. According as one broken line occupies the upper or the lower place, there are two possible variations—when put together, there are four possible variations; and these constitute the four symbols. But if three lines of these two kinds, the straight and the broken, are united or placed under each other, so, according to the number or the upper, middle or lower place of either species of line, there are eight possible combinations, and these are the eight koua, which, together with the four symbols, refer to the natural elements, and to the primary principles of all things, and serve as the symbolical expression, or scientific designation, of these.

What is now the real sense and the proper signification of those scientific primary lines among the Chinese, which exert an influence over the whole of their ancient literature, and upon which they themselves have written an incredible number of learned commentaries? Leibnitz supposed them to contain a reference to the modern algebraical discoveries, and especially to the binary calculation. Other writers, especially among the English, drawing their observations more from real life, remark on the other hand, that this ancient system of mystical lines serves at present the purpose of a sort of oracular play of questions, like the turning up of cards among Europeans, and is converted to many superstitious uses, especially for making pretended discoveries in alchymy, to which the Chinese are very much addicted. But this is only an abuse of modern times, which no longer understand this primitive system of symbolical signs and lines. The high antiquity of these lines and of the eight koua can be the less a matter of doubt as even mythology has ascribed them to the primitive Patriarch of the Chinese—Fohi, who is represented as having espied these lines on the back of a tortoise, and having thence deduced the written characters; which many of the learned Chinese wish to derive from these eight koua or combinations of the first symbolical lines. But the French scholar, whom I have more than once had occa-

sion to name, and who is well able to form a competent opinion on the subject, is most decidedly opposed to this Chinese derivation of all the written characters from the eight koua; and it would appear, indeed, that the latter differ totally from the common system of Chinese writing, and must be looked upon as of a distinct scientific nature.

Perhaps we may find a natural explanation of the true, and not very hidden sense of these signs, by comparing the fundamental doctrines in the elder Greek philosophy and science of nature. Thus, in the writings of Plato, mention is often made of the one and of the other, or of unity and duality, as the original elements of nature and first principles of all existence. By this is meant the doctrine of the first opposition and of the many oppositions derived from the first; and also of the possible, and conceivable, or required adjustment and compromise between the two, and of the restoration of the first unity and eternal equality anterior to all opposition, and which terminates and absorbs in itself all discord. Thus these eight koua, and mathematical signs or symbolical lines of ancient China, would comprise nothing more than a dry outline of all dynamical speculation and science. And it is therefore quite consistent that the old sacred book which contains these principles of Chinese science should be termed either the book of unity, or the book of changes; for

doubtless this title refers to the doctrine of an absolute unity, as the fundamental principle of all things, and to the doctrine of differences, or oppositions or changes springing out of that first unity. This doctrine of an opposition in all things, in thought as in nature—will become more apparent if we reflect on the new and brilliant discoveries in natural philosophy. For as in this science, the oxygen and hydrogen parts in the chemistry of metals, or the positive and negative end of electrical phenomena, in the attracting and repelling pole of magnetism, reveal such an opposition and dynamic play of living powers in nature; so in this philosophy of China, the abstract doctrine of this opposition and dynamical change of existence seems to be laid down with a sort of mathematical generality, as the basis of all future science. In our higher natural philosophy, indeed, all this has been proved from facts and experience; and, besides, this dynamic life forms but the one element, and the one branch of the science to be acquired; and a philosophy founded entirely on this dynamical law of existence, without any regard to the other and higher principle of internal experience and moral life, intellectual intuition and divine revelation, would be at best a very partial system, and by no means of general application; or if a general application of such a system were made, it must lead to endless mistakes, errors and contradictions. That such a system of

dynamical speculation and science, if extended to objects where it cannot be corroborated by facts—to all things divine and human, real, possible, or impossible, will undoubtedly lead to such a chaotic confusion of ideas; we have had a memorable experience in the German "Philosophy of Nature" of the last generation;* a philosophy which consisted in a fanciful play of thought with *Polarities, and oppositions, and points of indifference between them*, but which has been long appreciated in its true worth and real nature, and consigned to its proper limits.

Thus this outline of the old Chinese symbols of thought, which have a purely metaphysical import, would lay before us the most recent error clothed in the most antique form—but the Chinese system is in itself very remarkable and important. The fundamental text of the old sacred book on this doctrine of unity and oppositions, and which may now be easily comprehended, runs thus, according to Remusat's literal translation: "The great first Principle has engendered or

* The author alludes to Schelling's philosophy, which is called sometimes the "Philosophy of Nature," and sometimes the "Philosophy of Identity." M. Cuvier in his masterly introduction to his great work on Fossile Remains, mentions some of the extravagant theories broached in the department of geology alone by those German naturalists, who some years ago attempted to apply to natural philosophy, the metaphysical system of Schelling.—*Trans.*

produced two equations and differences, or primary rules of existence; but the two primary rules or two oppositions, namely Yn and Yang, or repose and motion (the affirmative and negative as we might otherwise call them) have produced four signs or symbols; and the four symbols have produced the eight koua, or further combinations." These eight koua are kien or ether, kui or pure water, li or pure fire, tchin or thunder, siun, the wind, kan, common water, ken, a mountain, and kuen, the earth.

On this ancient basis of Chinese philosophy, proceeding from indifference to differences, was afterwards founded the rationalist system of Lao-tseu, whose name occurs somewhat earlier than that of Confucius. The Taosse, or disciples of Reason, as the followers of this philosopher, entitle themselves, have very much degenerated, and have become a complete atheistical sect; though the guilt of this must be attributed, not to the founder, but to his disciples only. It is however acknowledged that the atheistical principles of this dead science of reason, have been very widely diffused throughout the Chinese empire, and for a certain period were almost generally prevalent.

As it is necessary to keep in view a certain chronological order, in our investigations of the progressive development of Chinese intellect, I may here observe that, as far as European research has been able to ascertain, we may

distinguish three principal and successive epochs in the history both of the religion and science of China. The first epoch is that of sacred tradition, and of the old constitution of the Chinese empire, and discloses those primitive views, and that primitive system of ethics, on which the empire was founded. The second, which we may fix about six centuries before our era, is the period of scientific philosophy, that pursued two opposite paths of enquiry. Confucius applied his attention entirely to the more practical study of ethics, with which, indeed, the old constitution, history and sacred traditions of the Chinese were very intimately connected; and the pure morality of Confucius which was the first branch of Chinese philosophy known in Europe, excited to a high degree the enthusiasm of many European scholars, who, by their too exclusive admiration, were prevented from forming a right estimate of the general character of Chinese philosophy.

Another system of philosophy, purely speculative and widely different from the practical and ethical doctrine of Confucius, was the system of Lao-tseu and his school, whence issued the above-mentioned rationalist sect of Taosse that has at last fallen into atheism. As to the question whether Lao-tseu travelled into the remote West, or in case he came only as far as Western Asia, whether he derived his system from the Persian or Egyptian doctrines or me-

diately from the Greek philosophy—this question I shall not here stop to discuss; for the matter is very doubtful in itself, and, were it even proved, still all the doctrines borrowed from the West were invested in a form purely Chinese, and clothed in quite a native garb. Those signs in the I—King, we have already spoken of, evidently comprise the germ of such an absolute, negative, and consequently atheistic rationalism—a mechanical play of idle abstractions. The third epoch in the progress of Chinese opinions is formed by the introduction of the Indian religion of Buddha or of Fo. The great revolution which had previously occurred in the old doctrines and manners of China; and the ruling spirit of that false and absolute rationalism, had already paved the way for the foreign religion of Buddha, which, of all the Pagan imitations of truth, occupies the lowest grade.

The old sacred traditions of the Chinese are not so overlaid, nor disfigured with fictions, as those of most other Asiatic nations; those of the Indians, for example, and of the early nations of Pagan Europe; but their traditions breathe the purer spirit of genuine history. Hence the poetry of the Chinese is not mythological, like that of other nations; but is either lyrical, (as in the Shi—King, a book of sacred songs, composed or compiled by Confucius); or is entirely confined to the representation of real life,

and of the social relations (as in the modern tales and novels, several of which have been translated into the European languages).

The old traditions of the Chinese have many traits of a kindred character with, or at least of a strong resemblance to, the Mosaic revelation, and even to the sacred traditions of the nations of Western Asia, particularly the Persians; and in these traditions we find much that either corroborates the testimony of Holy Writ, or at least affords matter for further comparison. We have before mentioned the very peculiar manner in which the Chinese speak of the great Flood, and how their first progenitors struggled against the savage waters, and how this task was afterwards neglected by bad or improvident rulers, who in consequence of this neglect were brought to ruin.

I will cite but one instance, where the parallel is indeed remarkable. In the I—King mention is made of the fallen dragon, or of the spirit of the dragon that, for his presumption in wishing to ascend to heaven, was precipitated into the abyss; and the words in which this event is described are precisely the same, or at least very similar to those which our Scriptures apply to the rebel angel, and the Persian books to Ahriman. However this dragon is whimsically, we might almost say, artlessly, made the sacred symbol of the Chinese empire and Emperor. The paternal power of the latter is

understood in a much too absolute sense: not only is the Emperor styled the lord of heaven and earth, and even the son of God; but his will it revered as the will of God, or rather completely identified with it; and even the most determined eulogists of the Chinese constitution and manners cannot deny that the monarch is almost the object of a real worship. Christianity teaches that all power is from God; but it does not thereby declare that all power is one and the same with God. Even a dominion over nature and her powers is ascribed to the Emperor of China, as the illustrious lord of heaven and earth.

Moreover, no hereditary nobility, no classes separated by distinctions of birth, exist in this country, as in India. The Emperor, half identified with the Deity, had alone the privilege in ancient times of offering on the sacred heights the great sacrifice to God. Some European writers have, from this circumstance, conceived the Chinese constitution to be theocratic; but if it be so, it is only in its outward form, or original mould; for it would be difficult to shew in it any trace of a true, vital theocracy. All that pomp of sacred ceremony and religious titles, so strangely abused, forms a striking contrast with real history, and with that long succession of profligate and unfortunate reigns and perpetual revolutions which fill most of the pages of the Chinese annals. We

should err greatly were we to regard all these high imperial titles as the mere swell and exaggeration of Eastern phraseology. The Chinese speak of their celestial Empire of the Medium, as they call their country, in terms which no European writer would apply to a Christian state, and such indeed as the Scriptures and religious authors use in reference only to the kingdom of God. They cannot conceive it possible for the earth to contain two emperors at one and the same time, and own the sway of more than one such absolute lord and master. Hence they look on every solemn foreign embassy as a debt of homage; nor is this sentiment the idle effect of vanity, or fancy—it is a firm and settled belief, perfectly coinciding with the whole system of their religious and political doctrines. This political idolatry of the state, which the Chinese identify with the emperor's person, is a pagan error: all excess, all exaggeration is sure to produce opposition and reaction, or a tendency thereto. Hence the pages of Chinese history present by the side of this high boasted ideal of absolute power, as a fearful concomitant, and fitting commentary, one continuous series of political revolutions and catastrophes. Neither the pure morality of those ancient books revered by the Chinese as sacred, whatever be the morality of books in which the principle of rationalism is so exclusively predominant; nor all

the high refinement of philosophic speculation in the scientific period of their history, have prevented this people from falling into the grossest of idolatries, and adopting a foreign superstition, which of all false religions is unquestionably the most reprehensible. Some persons have sought to trace a certain resemblance to Christianity in this religion of Fo, partly on account of some external institutions, and partly on account of the fundamental principle of the incarnation, equally perverted and misapplied in this superstition, as in the rival mythology of Brahma. The enemies of Christianity, since the time of Voltaire, have not failed, at the name of Bonzis, to throw out many malicious epigrams against religion. The similarity here observed is not real, but is that caricature resemblance the ape bears to man, and which has led many naturalists into error; for the ape has with man no real affinity, no true internal sympathy in his organic conformation, but merely the likeness of a spiteful parody, such as we may suppose an evil spirit to have devised to mock the image of God—the masterpiece of creation; and indeed the frailties and corruption of degenerate man may well give occasion to such a parody. We may lay it down as a general principle that the greater the apparent resemblance which a false religion, utterly and fundamentally different in its spiritual character, and moral tendency, externally bears to the

true, the more reprehensible will it be in itself, and the greater its hostility to the truth. An example near at hand will place the truth of this remark in the clearest light. If, for instance, Mahomet, instead of merely giving himself out as a prophet, had declared he was the son of God, the eternal Word, the incarnate Deity, the true and real Christ, his religious system would certainly have been far more adverse and repulsive to our feelings than it now is, and would have shocked alike every mind trained in the intellectual discipline of Europe, brought up with Christian feelings, and even unconsciously imbued with such. But this is precisely the characteristic feature, the peculiar doctrine of the religion of Buddha; for not only is Buddha himself worshipped as an incarnate divinity, but this prerogative of a divine incarnation has been transmitted to his chief priests through every generation; and thus this personal idolatry has ever been kept alive. In regard to morals, too, a comparison between the religion of the Buddhists and of the Mahometans would be equally disadvantageons to the former. The injurious influence which polygamy, and that degradation of the female sex it necessarily involves, exert on the manners and intellectual character of Mahometan nations, has been often observed, and can never be questioned. But that that other and opposite abuse of marriage,

poly-andry, which is legally established among the Buddhist nations, is infinitely more repugnant to, and destructive of morality, and more debasing to the male character, must be perceptible to the feelings of every individual, and can require no comment. I do not find, indeed, in the different accounts of China, any mention made of this abominable practice; and it is very possible that in this, as in other cases, the good old customs of the Chinese have had the ascendancy, and preserved their beneficial influence: but in Thibet, the chief seat of Buddhism, in many parts of India, and in other countries where this religion prevails, the unnatural custom exists.

The writer* best versed in the language and writings of the Buddhist Monguls boasts of their superior humanity and mildness of manners, when compared with the Mahometan nations; but this observation must be taken only in a relative sense, and understood of a mere outward polish, and superficial refinement of manner; for history does not show the Monguls to have been at all more humane in their conduct. The indescribable confusion in the mythological system of the Buddhists, their innumerable books of metaphysics, all wearisomely prolix and unintelligible,

* M. Abel Remusat.

according to the explicit avowal of the critic just now cited, M. Remusat, prove the essentially false direction of speculation and philosophy among the Buddhists—a philosophy which, by a dialectic or rather ideal course, has been led into a chaos of void abstractions, and a pure nihilism; and more scientific observers have ever judged it to be an absolute system of atheism.

It would appear that the Nestorians, or other degenerate Christian sects, have exerted some influence on Buddhism, and co-operated in its further development;—so we may well imagine that this exotic influence has not tended to the amelioration or improvement of a religion false in its essence, and fundamentally corrupt; but that its vices and absurdities have remained equally flagrant, or, as it is easy to suppose, have been aggravated in the progress of time.

This religion of Fo must not be considered as resembling Christianity, because its followers have monastic institutions, and make use of a kind of rosary; but as the political idolatry of the Chinese for their state and sovereign is widely different from the true principle of Christian government, *that all power is from God*, so this false religion of Buddha is further removed than any other from Christianity: it is on the contrary adverse to our religion, and, so far from being half similar to

Christianity, is a decidedly anti-Christian creed. *

We may thus sum up the result of our enquiries:—among the great nations of primitive antiquity who stood the nearest, or at least very near, to the source of sacred tradition—the word of primitive revelation,—the Chinese hold a very distinguished place; and many passages in their primitive history, many remarkable vestiges of eternal truth—the heritage of old thoughts — to be found in their ancient classical

* No Gentile people preserved so long and in such purity the worship of the true God as the Chinese. This no doubt must be ascribed to the secluded situation of the country—to the great reverence of the Chinese for their ancestors, as well as to the patriarchal mildness of their early governments; and, we must add, to the unpoetical character of the nation itself, which was a safeguard against Idolatry. There is historical evidence that, up to two centuries before the Christian era, idolatry had made little progress among this people. So vivid was their expectation of the Messiah—"the Great Saint who, as Confucius says, was to appear in the West"—so fully sensible were they not only of the place of his birth, but of the time of his coming, that, about 60 years after the birth of our Saviour, they sent their envoys to hail the expected Redeemer. These envoys encountered on their way the Missionaries of Buddhism coming from India—the latter, announcing an incarnate God, were taken to be the disciples of the true Christ, and were presented as such to their countrymen by the deluded ambassadors. Thus was this religion introduced into China, and thus did this phantasmagoria of Hell intercept the light of the gospel. So, not in the internal spirit only, but in the outward history of Buddhism, a demoniacal intent is very visible.—*Trans.*

works, prove the originally high eminence of this people. But at a very early period, their science had taken a course completely erroneous, and even their language partly followed this direction, or at least assumed a very stiff and artificial character. Descending from one degree of political idolatry to a grade still lower, they have at last openly embraced a foreign superstition—a diabolic mimicry of Christianity, which emanated from India, has made Thibet its principal seat, prevails in China, and, widely diffused over the whole middle Asia, reckons a greater number of followers than any other religion on the earth.

END OF LECTURE III.

LECTURE IV.

Of the Institutions of the Indians—the Brahminical caste, and the hereditary priesthood.—Of the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, considered as the basis of Indian life, and of Indian philosophy.

When Alexander the Great had attained the object of his most ardent desires and, realizing the fabulous expedition of Bacchus and his train of followers, had at last reached India, the Greeks found this vast region, even on this side of the Ganges—(for that river, the peculiar object of Alexander's ambition, the conqueror in despite of all his efforts, was unable to reach) — the Greeks found this country extensive, fertile, highly cultivated, populous, and filled with flourishing cities, as it was, divided into a number of great and petty kingdoms. They found there an hereditary division of castes, such as still subsists; although they reckoned not four, but seven castes, a circumstance, how-

ever, which, as we shall see later, argues no essential difference in the division of Indian classes at that period. They remarked, also, that the country was divided into two religious parties or sects, the *Brachmans and the Samaneans*. By the first, the Greeks designated the followers of the religion of Brahma, as well as of Vishnoo and Siva, a religion which still subsists, and is more deeply rooted and more widely diffused and prevalent in India than any other religious system; distinguished as it is by its leading dogma of the transmigration of souls, which has exerted the mightiest influence on every department of thought, on the whole bearing of Indian philosophy, and on the whole arrangement of Indian life. But by the Greek denomination of *Samaneans* we must certainly understand the Buddhists, as, among the rude nations of central Asia, and in other countries, the priests of the religion of Fo bear at this day the name of *Schamans*. These priests indeed appear to be little better than mere sorcerers and jugglers, as are the priests of all idolatrous nations that are sunk to the lowest degree of barbarism and superstition. The word itself is pure Indian, and occurs frequently in the religious and metaphysical treatises of that people; for originally, and before it had received such a mean acceptation among those Buddhist nations, it had quite a philosophical sense, as it still has in the Sanscrit. This word

denotes that equability of mind, or that deep internal equanimity which, according to the Indian philosophy, must precede, and is indispensably requisite to the perfect union with the God-head. In general all the names by which Buddha, the priests of his religion, and its important and fundamental doctrines are known, whether in Thibet, or among the Mongul nations, in Siam, in Pegu, or in Japan—in general, we say, all those names are pure Indian words; for the tradition of all those nations, with unanimous accord, deduces the origin of this sect from India.

The name of Buddha, which the Chinese have changed, or shortened into that of Fo, is rather an honorary appellation, and is expressive of the divine wisdom with which, in the opinion of his followers, he was endowed; or which rather, according to their belief, became visible in his person. The period of his existence is fixed by many at six hundred years, by others again at a thousand years, before the Christian era. His real and historical name was Gautama; and it is remarkable that the same name was borne by the author of one of the principal philosophical systems of the Hindoos, the Nyaya philosophy, the leading principles of which will be the subject of future consideration, when we come to speak of the Indian philosophy. Indeed, the dialectic spirit, which pervades the Nyaya philosophy would seem to be

of a kindred nature and like origin with the confused metaphysics of the Buddhists. But the names, notwithstanding their identity, denote two different persons; although even the founder of the dialectic system, like almost all other celebrated names in the ancient history, traditions and science of the Indians, figures in the character of a mythological personage. But we must first take a view of the state of manners, and the state of political civilization, in India, in order to be able to form a right judgment and estimate of the intellectual and scientific exertions of its inhabitants, and of the peculiar nature and tendency of the Indian opinions.

By the manner in which the Greek writers speak of the two religious parties, into which Alexander found the country divided, it can scarcely be doubted that the Buddhists at that period were far more numerous, and more extensively diffused throughout India, than they are at the present day, and this inference is even corroborated by many historical vouchers of the Indians themselves. Although the Buddhists are now but an obscure sect of dissenters in the Western Peninsula, they are still tolerably numerous in several of its provinces; while, on the other hand, they have complete possession of the whole Eastern and Indo-chinese peninsula. Besides this sect, there are many other religious dissenters even in Hindostan; such for instance,

as the sect of *Jains*, who steer a middle course between the followers of the old and established religion of Brahma, and the Buddhists; for, like the latter, they reject the Indian division and system of castes. Even the established religion itself is divided into three parties, which, though they do not form precisely separate sects, still are marked by no inconsiderable differences in their opinions, views, and conduct: according as each of these parties acknowledges the supremacy, or renders a nearly exclusive worship to one or other of the three principal Hindoo divinities, Brahma, Vishnoo, and Siva. And, although in the empire of the great Mogul, the number of the Mahometan conquerors, and of those that accompanied them into India, was very small, compared with the mass of the native population, yet, after the total destruction of this empire, there still remain several millions of Mahometans in the country. Even the Persian language, or a corrupt dialect of it, which these conquerors introduced, is still in many places in use as the language of ordinary life, trade, and business; in the same way as the Portuguese in the maritime and commercial cities of India, or the Lingua Franca in our eastern factories, serves as the usual and convenient medium of communication.

The Indian is not the only, or exclusively prevailing, language in the whole peninsula; in several provinces, as for instance, on the

southern coast, and in the Isle of Ceylon, quite a different language prevails; and the old cultivated and classical speech of India is there unknown. The name of Sanscrit, by which the latter is designated, denotes a cultivated or highly wrought language; but the Pracrit, which is employed together or alternately with the Sanscrit in the theatrical pieces of the Indians, signifies a natural and artless speech, and is not so much a distinct dialect as a softer pronunciation of the Sanscrit, which smoothes, suppresses, or melts down the hard and crowded consonants, and pays less regard to the more elaborate grammatical forms of this language. The Pracrit, which is used in dramatic pieces, particularly in the female parts, stands from its more simple grammar, in the same relation to the Sanscrit as the softer Italian or Portuguese is to the old Latin, without however the same heterogeneous alloy. But, independently of these variations in the later and beautiful language of Indian poetry, the language of that country is split and divided into a number of dissimilar and widely dissimilar dialects, such as the Malabar, for example; and almost in every province the common language undergoes a variety of changes; and this is the case even in Bengal. The country of the Upper Ganges, especially Benares, is renowned for being the chief seat of the Sanscrit tongue,—the place, at

least, where it is best understood, and spoken with the greatest purity.

Those languages which differ totally from the Indian belong in part to quite a different race of men, mostly, perhaps, to the Malays: for, so far is India from being entirely peopled by one single race of inhabitants, that we find in several of its provinces tribes of an origin totally different from that of the Hindoos. This great variety in the whole life, manners, and political institutions of the Indians, forms a striking contrast with the absolute unity, and internal uniformity of the Chinese Empire. It was perhaps this variety in the moral and political aspect of ancient India that gave rise to the denomination which it has received in the old sacred Median books of Zoroaster, where, in the first *fargard*, or section of the Vendidat, it is described as the fifteenth pure region of the earth, created by Ormuzd, and designated by the name of *Hapte Heando* — a name which signifies the seven Indias. As India is still split into a multitude of sects and religions, and divided into different tribes, speaking various languages; so, as Herodotus long ago observed, it has for the most part been ever composed of a multitude of great and petty states, although from its natural boundaries it might easily have been formed into one great monarchy, and really constitutes but one country in its geographical circumscription.

The historian of India would have principally

to speak of the successes of a long series of foreign conquerors, who, from Alexander the Great to Nadir Shah, have invaded this country by the North-west side from Persia. The Greeks were indeed told that, before Alexander the Great, no foreign conqueror had ever invaded India; and even after this invasion, and on the death of Sandracottus, when the Indians were liberated from the transient dominion of the Greeks, they were for a long lapse of ages governed by native princes; and their country was parcelled out into a number of great and petty kingdoms, such as those of Magadha, Ayodha, &c. It is a striking incident in the moral and intellectual history of the Hindoos that amid all the revolutions under their ancient and native rulers, and amid all the later vicissitudes of foreign conquest, their peculiar modes of life and their institution of castes should have been preserved, and, in despite of all the changes of time and of empire, should have stood unchanged, like the one surviving monument of the primitive world. In the administration and government of this country, the absolute monarchical sway which exists in China, and the unlimited despotism of other oriental countries, could never be realized; for that hereditary division of classes, and those hereditary rights belonging to each, which, as they form a part of the Indian constitution, have taken such deep root in the soil; and which, as they rest on the immoveable basis

of ancient faith, have become, as it were, the second nature of this people—all these present an unassailable rampart, which not even a foreign conqueror could ever succeed in overthrowing. We can hence understand what led the Greeks to believe and assert that there were Republican states in India. If from prepossessions, which were natural to that people, they asserted too much, or thought they saw more than a nearer investigation proves to be actually the case; still their assertion is not totally without foundation, for the Indian system of castes is in many respects more favourable to institutions of a Republican nature, or at least Republican tendency, than the constitution of any other Asiatic state. When those modern writers therefore, who were the declared enemies of all hereditary rank and hereditary rights, spoke with contempt and abhorence of the Indian constitution of castes, represented it as the peculiar basis of despotism, and even applied the name of caste as a party-word to the social relations of Europe; their assertions were false and utterly opposed to history. The invectives of these writers may be easily accounted for, from their very democratic views, or rather from their doctrine of absolute equality, as this equality itself is ever the attendant of despotism, produces it, or proceeds from it, and is one of its most distinctive characteristics. In confirmation of what we have said, we may observe,

that even at the present day most of the cities of India possess municipal institutions, which are much admired by English writers, who attest from their personal experience and observation, their salutary influence on individual and public prosperity. In general the English have paid very great attention to the jurisprudence and civil legislation of India; as the fundamental principle of their Indian government is to rule that country according to its own laws, customs and privileges; while, on the contrary, the other European powers that once had obtained a firm footing in India, formed alliances with, and attached themselves by preference to, the Mahometan sovereigns of the country. By this simple, but enlightened principle in their Indian policy and administration, the English have obtained the ascendency over all their rivals or opponents, and have become complete masters of the whole of this splendid region.

The scholars of Europe began their Indian researches by the study and translation of the laws and jurisprudence of the Hindoos, the text as well as commentaries, and it was only at a later period they extended their inquiries to other subjects. The Indian jurisprudence is undoubtedly a standing proof and monument of the comparatively high and very ancient moral and intellectural refinement of that people; and a more minute and profound investigation of that jurisprudence would no doubt give rise to

many interesting points of comparison, and to many striking analogies, partly with the old Athenian, or first Roman laws, partly with the Mosaic legislation, and even in some particular points, with the Germanic constitution. As the caste of warriors in India, who constitute the class of landed proprietors, and the aristocracy of the country, are founded on exactly the same principle as the hereditary nobility of Germany, it cannot excite surprise, if we find in India, not indeed the elaborate and complex feudality of the Germans, but a more simple system of fiefs.

But, according to the plan we have proposed to ourselves, in the history of all ancient, and especially of the primitive Asiatic nations, the matter of greatest moment must be to trace their intellectual progress, their scientific labours, and predominant opinions; all those views of divine and human things, that have a mighty influence on life; and finally the peculiar religious feelings and principles of each of those ancient nations. In the second part of this work, when we shall have to speak of the progress of mankind in modern times, we may perhaps change our point of view, and find it of more importance to trace the mutual relations between the external state of society and the internal development of intellect. But in that remote antiquity, which is contiguous to the primitive ages, the points of greatest moment, as

we have already observed, are the intellectual character, the modes of thinking, and the religion of those nations. On the other hand, their civil legislation, and even their political constitutions, however important, interesting and instructive the closer investigation of those subjects may be in other respects, can occupy in this history but a secondary place; and it will suffice for our purpose to point out some leading points of legislation that serve as the foundation and principle of the moral and intellectual character of those nations. In India this leading point is the institution of castes, the most remarkable feature in all Indian life, and which in its essential traits existed in Egypt. This singular phenomenon of Indian life has even some points of connexion with a capital article of their creed, the doctrine of the transmigration of souls—a doctrine which will be later the subject of our enquiries, and which we shall endeavour to place in a nearer and clearer light. In shewing the influence of the institution of castes on the state of manners in India, I may observe, in the first place, that in this division of the social ranks there is no distinct class of *slaves* (as was indeed long ago remarked by the *Greeks*); that is to say, no such class of bought slaves—no men, the property and merchandise of their fellow-men—as existed in ancient Greece and Rome, as exist even at this day among Mahometan nations; and, as in the

case of the Negroes, are still to be found in the colonial possessions of the Christian and European states. The labouring class of the *Sudras* is undoubtedly not admitted to the high privileges of the first classes, and is in a state of great dependance upon these; but this very caste of Sudras has its hereditary and clearly defined rights. It is only by a crime that a man in India can lose his caste, and the rights annexed to it. These rights are acquired by birth; except in the instance of the offspring of unlawful marriages between persons of different castes. The fate of these hapless wretches is indeed hard,—harder, almost, than that of real slaves among other nations. Ejected, excommunicated as it were, loaded with malediction, they are regarded as the outcasts of society, yea almost, of humanity itself. This terrible exclusion, however, from the rights of citizenship occurs only in certain clearly specified cases. There are even some cases of exception explicitly laid down, where a marriage with a person of different caste is permitted; or where at least the only consequence to the children of such marriage is a degradation to an inferior class of society. But the general rule is that a lawful marriage can be contracted only with a woman of the same caste. Women participate in all the rights of their caste; in the high prerogatives of Brahmins, if they are of the sacerdotal race (although there are not and never were

priestesses among the Indians as among the other heathen nations of antiquity); or in the privileges of nobility, if they belong to the caste of the *Cshatriyas*. These privileges which belong and are secured to women, and this participation in the rights and advantages of their respective classes, must tend much undoubtedly to mitigate the injurious effects of polygamy. The latter custom has ever prevailed, and still prevails, in India; though not to the same degree of licentiousness, nor with the same unlimited and despotic controul, as in Mahometan countries; but a plurality of wives is there permitted only under certain conditions, and with certain legal restrictions; consequently in that milder form, under which it existed of old in the warm climes of Asia, and according to the patriarchal simplicity of the yet thinly peopled world. The much higher social rank, and better moral condition of the female sex in India, are apparent from those portraits of Indian life which are drawn in their beautiful works of poetry, whether of a primitive or a later date; and from that deep feeling of tenderness, that affectionate regard and reverence, with which the character of woman and her domestic relations are invariably represented. These few examples suffice to show the moral effects of the Indian division of castes; and while they serve to defend this institution against a sweeping sentence of condemnation, or the indiscriminate censure of

too partial prejudice, they place the subject in its true and proper light, and present alike the advantages and defects of the system.

From its connexion with the general plan of my work, I am desirous of entering more deeply into the internal principle of this singular division and rigid separation of the social ranks, and into the historical origin of this strange constitution of human society. When the Greeks, who accompanied or followed Alexander into India, numbered seven instead of four castes in that country, they did not judge inaccurately the outward condition of things; but they paid not sufficient attention to the Indian notions of castes; and their very enumeration of those castes proves they had mistaken some points of detail. In this enumeration they assign the first rank to the *Brachmans*, or wise men; and by the artisans, they no doubt understood the trading and manufacturing class of the Vaisyas. The councillors and intendants of kings and princes do not constitute a distinct caste, but are mere officers and functionaries; who, if they be lawyers, belong to, and must be taken from, the caste of Brahmins; though the other two upper castes are not always rigidly excluded from these functions. The class again that tends the breeding of cattle, and lives by the chase, forms not a distinct caste, but merely follows a peculiar kind of employment. And when the Greeks make two castes of the agri-

culturists and the warriors, they only mean to draw a distinction between the labourers and the masters, or the real proprietors of the soil. Even the name of *Cshatriyas* signifies landedproprietor; and, as in the old Germanic constitution, the arriere-ban was composed of landed proprietors, and the very possession of the soil imposed on the nobility the obligation of military service; so, in the Indian constitution, the two ideas of property in land, and military service, are indissolubly connected. Some modern enquirers have attached very great importance to the undoubtedly wide and remarkable separation of the fourth or menial caste of Sudras from the three upper castes. They have thought they perceived, also, a very great difference in the bodily structure and general physiognomy of this fourth caste from those of the others; and have thence concluded that the caste of Sudras is descended from a totally different race, some primitive and barbarous people whom a more civilized nation, to whom the three upper castes must have belonged, have conquered and subdued, and degraded to that menial condition, the lowest grade in the social scale,—a grade to which the iron arm of law eternally binds them down. This hypothesis is in itself not very improbable; and it may be proved from history that the like has really occurred in several Asiatic, and even European, countries. In the back-ground of old, mighty and civilized nations

we can almost always trace the primeval inhabitants of the country, who, dispossessed of their territory, have been either reduced to servitude by their conquerors, or have gradually been incorporated with them. These primitive inhabitants, when compared with their later and more civilized conquerors, appear indeed in general rude and barbarous; though we find among them a certain number of ancient customs and arts, which by no means tend to confirm the notion of an original and universal savage state of nature. It is possible that the same circumstances have occurred in India; though this is by no means a necessary inference, for humanity, in its progress, follows not one uniform course, but pursues various and widely different paths; and, hitherto at least, no adequate historical proof has, in my opinion, been adduced for the reality of such an occurrence in India. It has also been conjectured that the caste of warriors, or the princes and hereditary nobility, possessed orginally greater power and influence; and that it is only by degrees the race of Brahmins has attained to that great preponderance which it displays in later times, and which it even still possesses. We find, indeed, in the old epic, mythological, and historical poems of the Indians, many passages which describe a contest between these two classes, and which represent the deified heroes of India victoriously defending the wise and pious Brah-

mins from the attacks of the fierce and presumptuous Cshatriyas. This account, however, is susceptible of another interpretation, and should not be taken exclusively in this political sense. That in the brilliant period of their ancient and national dynasties and governments, the princes and warlike nobility possessed greater weight and importance than at present, is quite in the nature of things, and appears indeed to have been undoubtedly the case. From many indications in the old Indian traditions and histories, it would appear that the caste of Cshatriyas, was partially at least, of foreign extraction; while those traditionary accounts constantly represent the caste of Brahmins as the highest class, and nobler part, nay, the corner-stone of the whole community.

The origin of an hereditary caste of warriors, when considered in itself, may be easily accounted for, and it is no wise contrary to the nature of things that, even in a state of society where legal rights are yet undefined, the son, especially the eldest, should govern and administer the territory or property which his deceased father possessed, and even in those cases where it was necessary, should take possession, administer, and defend this property by open force and the aid of his dependents.

But afterwards, when the social relations became more clearly fixed by law, and an union on a larger scale was formed by a general

league, as the duties of military service were annexed to the soil, so the right to the soil was again determined by, and depended on, military service; now, in that primitive period of history, such a political union might have been formed by a common subordination to a higher power, or by a confederacy between several potentates; and this has really been the origin of an hereditary landed nobility in many countries.

The hereditary continuance or transmission of arts and trades, whereby the son pursues the occupation of the father, and learns and applies what the latter has discovered, has nothing singular in itself, and appears indeed to contain its own explanation. But it is not easy, or at least equally so, to account for the exclusive distribution and the exact and rigid separation of castes, particularly by any religious motives and principles, which are, however, indubitably connected with this institution. Still less can we understand the existence of a great hereditary class of priests, eternally divided from the rest of the community, such as existed both in India and Egypt. To comprehend this strange phenomenon, we must endeavour to discover its origin, and trace it back, as far as is possible, to the primitive ages of the world.—If, for the sake of brevity, I have used the expression, "a class *of hereditary priests*," I ought to add, in order to explain my meaning more clearly, that the word *priests* must not be taken in that li-

mited sense which antiquity attached to it; that the Brahmins are not merely confined to the functions of prayer, but are strictly and eminently theologians, since they alone are permitted to read and interpret the Vedas, while the other castes can read only with their sanction such passages of those sacred writings as are adapted to their circumstances, and the fourth caste are entirely prohibited from hearing any portion of them. The Brahmins are also the lawyers and physicians of India, and hence the Greeks did not designate them, erroneously when they termed them *the caste of philosophers.*

We have already had occasion to observe that the Mosaic narrative,—that first monument of all history, (which a very intellectual German writer has called the primitive document of the human race, and which it indeed is even in a mere historical sense, and in the literal acceptation of the word,) that the Mosaic narrative, we say, ascribes to the Cainites the origin of hereditary arts and trades. And there are two which are particularly worthy of remark, and to which I drew your attention—the knowledge of metals, and the art of music. I used the general expression, the knowledge of metals, because in the primitive ages of the world, the art of working mines, or of exploring and extracting metals from the earth, was essentially connected with the art of preparing and polishing them; and this knowledge of metals was very instrumental

in forwarding the infant civilization of the primitive world, as the art of working and polishing them has ever contributed to the refinement of mankind. By the music of the Cainites, I said we were not to understand our own more elaborate and sublime system of melody. This art was chiefly consecrated in those ancient times, to the uses of divine service; still older, perhaps, was the medicinal, or rather the magical, use and influence of music. This is at least indicated by the tradition and mythology of all nations; and such a supposition is quite conformable to the spirit of those early ages; and I would here remind you that, in the primitive symbolical writing of the Chinese, the sign of a magician represents also a priest—a character which, as Remusat has observed, is not to be found in the narrow circle of their symbols. I added, that the existence of an hereditary caste of warriors among the Cainites was possible, and even probable; though not so, in my opinion, the existence of an hereditary sacerdotal caste. But though such an institution did not emanate from the Cainites, it may at least have been occasioned by them. As I said before, the Mosaic history represents the vast, boundless, prodigious corruption of the world in the age immediately preceding the deluge, as produced solely by the union of the better and godly portion of mankind with the lawless descendants of Cain. Thus this would supposes a certain dread

and apprehension of any alliance and intercourse with a race laden with malediction, and pregnant with calamity. And may not this very circumstance have given rise to the establishment of a distinctly separate and hereditary class, not of priests in the later signification of that word, but of men chosen and consecrated by God, and entirely devoted to his service? and, consequently, is it not among the later Sethites, we must look for the origin of this institution?

We should transport ourselves in imagination to the age of the Patriarchs, and then consider that, with the high powers which they still possessed, they must have watched with the most jealous and far-sighted solicitude over the fate of their posterity, in order to preserve them in their original purity and high hereditary dignity. The Indian traditions acknowledge and revere the succession of the first ancestors of mankind, or the holy Patriarchs of the primitive world, under the name of the seven great *Rishis*, or sages of hoary antiquity; though they invest their history with a cloud of fictions. They place all these Patriarchs in the primitive world, and assign them to the race of Brahmins; —a circumstance which cannot here appear unfitting. It has been often observed that the Indians have no regular histories, no works of real historical science; and the reason is that with them the sense of the primitive world is

still fresh and lively, and that not only do they clothe their ideas in a poetical garb, but all their conceptions of human affairs and events are exclusively mythological; so that all the real events of later historical times are absorbed in the element of mythology, or at least strongly tinged with its colours. It is in the same way, the Panegyrists of the Chinese language remark that the almost total absence of grammar in that language, among a people of such highly cultivated intellect, should not be taken merely to denote the poverty and jejuneness of the infancy of speech, as this in a great measure originated in the fact that the profound primitive emotions, which gave birth to those first languages, were too absorbed in the subject of their contemplation, too much bent on giving utterance to the most effective word, or expressing themselves with the most condensed brevity, to perplex or trouble themselves with nicer distinctions, and minor and often superfluous rules.

The providential care of these first Patriarchs for the preservation and prosperity of their offspring and race is evinced in those Patriarchal scenes described not only in the Sagas of other primitive nations, but also in the sacred writings of the Hebrews; and where the hoary grand-sire imparts and transmits to his sons and grand-sons the power of his benediction, which was not a mere empty form of

words, as the special inheritance of each. We see, too, that, after assigning the first rank to the eldest son, or to some favourite child, perhaps, originally chosen and preferred by God, the venerable Patriarch utters some words of warning which the succeeding history but too well justifies; or darkly indicates a deep presentiment of some great impending calamity. But there is, in particular, a passage relative to the first great progenitor of mankind which deserves to be here noticed. When the calamitous epoch of the first fraternal contest, and the first fatal fratricide had elapsed, it is said in Holy Writ, "Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his image, and called his name Seth." The first thing that must strike us in this passage is the great and humiliating inferiority which it involves. Adam was created after the likeness of Almighty God; but Seth is begotten after the likeness of Adam. Yet there is no doubt that, from the peculiar style and manner of Holy Writ, a very high pre-eminence was here conferred on Seth. For in the same way as we have seen that the Patriarchs were wont to impart their blessings to their sons and their posterity, Adam granted and communicated to Seth, as to his first-born in this second commencement of the human race, and as his inheritance and exclusive birth-right, all those prerogatives and high gifts and powers, which he himself had originally received from

his Creator, and which, on his reconciliation with his God, he had once more obtained. Nothing similar is said of the other sons and daughters afterwards begotten by Adam, and through whom other nations have derived their descent from the common parent. This circumstance confirms and explains that high pre-eminence which, according to sacred tradition, was conferred on the race of Seth. As to the high powers which the father of mankind had preserved after his fall, or had a second time received, we may well suppose that, after the crime and flight of Cain, he would endeavour to retrieve his errors by the establishment of the better race of Seth, and by a consequent renovation of humanity. This is not a mere arbitrary supposition, for it is expressly said in Holy Writ that the first man, ordained to be "the father of the whole earth," (as he is there called,) became on his reconciliation with his Maker, the wisest of all men, and, according to tradition, the greatest of prophets, who, in his far-reaching ken, foresaw the destinies of all mankind, in all successive ages down to the end of the world. All this must be taken in a strict historical sense, for the moral interpretation we abandon to others. The pre-eminence of the Sethites, chosen by God, and entirely devoted to his service, must be received as an undoubted historical fact, to which we find many pointed allusions even in the traditions of the other

Asiatic nations. Nay the hostility between the Sethites and Cainites, and the mutual relations of these two races, form the chief clue to the history of the primitive world, and even of many particular nations of antiquity. That, after the violent but transient interruption occasioned by the deluge, the remembrance of many things might revive, and the same or a similar hostility between the two races, which had existed in the ante-diluvian world, might be a second time displayed, is a matter which it is unnecessary to examine any further. Equally needless would it be to shew that, in the increasing degeneracy of man, every thing was soon more and more disfigured and deranged, and finally became for the most part undistinguishable, till it was afterwards a problem for the historical enquirer to reduce to the simple elements of their origin the greatest, most extraordinary and most remarkable phenomena which still remained, or were remembered, of the primitive ages.

If I think it not impossible that the Indian constitution of castes, and its most important branch, the Brahminical class—that is to say, the moral and general conception of this ancient institution, may be connected with the scriptural history and the sacred tradition respecting the race of Seth; I must observe that to this hypothesis an objection can no more be taken from the present character and moral condition of the Brahmins, than we can estimate

the high gifts, the great men and the mighty Prophets, that the Almighty once accorded to the Jewish nation, or such noble natures as those of Moses and Elias, by the present fallen state of that dispersed people.

These remarks may suffice to give an idea of the most important feature in Indian society. Before I attempt to examine the second great characteristic of this people,— the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, a principle which, if it has not produced, has at least given the peculiar bent to their whole philosophy; I wish to take a general view of Polytheism, particularly as our notions of it, chiefly derived from the Greeks, are by no means perfectly applicable to the primitive nations of Asia.

We are wont to regard the Grecian mythology, and its many-coloured world of fables, only as the beautiful effusion of poetry, or a playful creation of fancy; and we never think of enquiring deeply or minutely into its details, or of examining its moral import and influence. It is the more natural that the mythology of the Greeks should produce this impression on our minds, and that we should regard it in this light, as all the higher ideas and severer doctrines on the God-head, its soveriegn nature and infinite might, on the eternal wisdom and providence that conducts and directs all things to their proper end, on the infinite Mind, and supreme Intelligence that created all things, and

that is raised far above external nature; all these higher ideas and severer doctrines have been expounded more or less perfectly by Pythagoras, or by Anaxagoras and Socrates; and have been developed in the most beautiful and luminous manner by Plato and the philosophers that followed him. But all this did not pass into the popular religion of the Greeks, and it remained for the most part a stranger to these exalted doctrines; and, though we find in this mythology many things capable of a deeper import and more spiritual signification, yet they appear but as rare vestiges of ancient truth—vague presentiments — fugitive tones — momentary flashes, revealing a belief in a supreme Being, an almighty Creator of the universe, and the common Father of mankind.

But it is far otherwise in the Indian mythology. There, amid a sensual idolatry of nature more passionate and enthusiastic still than that of the Greeks, amid Pagan fictions and conceptions far more gigantic than those of the latter, we find almost all the truths of natural theology, not indeed without a considerable admixture of error, expressed with the utmost earnestness and dignity. We meet too, in this mythology, with the most rigidly scientific and metaphysical notions of the Supreme Being, his attributes and his relations; and it is the peculiar character of the Indian mythology to combine a gigantic wildness of fantasy, and a boundless enthusiasm

for nature, with a deep mystical import, and a profound philosophic sense. If the Pythagoreans had succeeded in the design, which they in all probability entertained, of rendering their lofty notions on the Deity and on man, on the immortality of the soul, and the invisible world, more generally prevalent, and of introducing these ideas into the popular religion; as it was not their intention entirely to reject the vulgar creed, but only to mould it to their own principles, and impart to it a higher and more spiritual sense, (an attempt which was afterwards made by the New Platonists and the Emperor Julian, out of hatred to Christianity, though, as the time had then long gone by, their enterprise was attended with no permanent effects); if the Pythagoreans, we say, had succeeded in their design, the Greek mythology might then have borne some resemblance to the Indian, and we might have instituted a comparison between the two. In the Indian mythology this strange combination, this inconsistent junction of the sublimest truth with the most sensual error, of the wildest and most extravagant fiction with the most abstract metaphysics, and even the purest natural theology (if we may thus call the divine Revelation of the primitive world); this strange combination, we say, has not been the effect of artful interpolation, but the fruit of native growth and of earliest development.

We must now be on our guard not to admit

too lightly or too quickly the coincidence of certain symbols and conceptions of mythology with truths and doctrines familiar to ourselves. How much, for instance, would a man err, who would suppose that there was any analogy in the Indian symbol and notion of *Trimurti*, or the divine Triad, I do not say with the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, but with the opinion of either of the Platonic schools on the triple essence, or the triple Personality of the one God. In this symbol the heads of the three principal Hindoo divinities, Brahma, Vishnoo, and Siva, the Gods of creation, preservation and destruction, are united in one figure; and this union undoubtedly indicates the primary energy common to all three. If we examine each in particular, we shall see that the attributes assigned to Brahma, and the expressions usually applied to his person, when divested of their poetical garb, and mythic accompaniments, may often, almost literally and in strict truth, be referred to the Deity. The all-pervading and self-transforming Vishnoo is much more the wonderful Prometheus of nature, than a real and well defined divinity. The third in this divine Triad, the formidable and destructive Siva, has but a very remote analogy with the Deity that judges and chastises the world according to justice. This God of destruction, whose worshippers appear to have been formerly the most numerous in India, as those of Vishnoo are at

the present day; this God of destruction, with his serpents and bracelets of human skulls, appears evidently to be that demon of corruption who brought death into all creation, and who here, whimsically and inconsistently enough, has been introduced into the symbol, and made a part of the Deity itself. This union or confusion of Eternal Perfection with the Evil Principle is made in another way by the Indian philosophers; as some of them explain the doctrine of Trimurti, or the divine Triad by reference to the *Traigunyan*, or the three *qualities*. These three different regions, or degrees, into which, according to the Indian doctrine, all existence is divided, are the pure world of eternal truth, or of light, the middle region of vain appearance and illusion, and the abyss of darkness. However, it must be observed that the Indians do not express the pure and metaphysical idea of the Supreme Being by either of the names of the two last-mentioned popular divinities; nor do they even denote this idea by the name of Brahma, the first person of their trinity, but by the word *Brahm*, a neuter noun which signifies the Supreme Being.

As there were now two conflicting elements in the breast of man—the old inheritance or original dowry of truth, which God had imparted to him in the primitive revelation; and error, or the foundation for error in his degraded sense and spirit now turned from God to Nature—how

easily must error have sprung up, when the precious gem of divine truth was no longer guarded with jealous care, nor preserved in its pristine purity; how much must truth have been obscured, as error advanced in all its formidable might, and in all its power of seduction; and how soon must not this have happened among a people, like the Indians, with whom imagination and a very deep, but still sensual, feeling for Nature, were so predominant!—It was thus a wild enthusiasm, and a sensual idolatry of Nature, generally superseded the simple worship of Almighty God, and set aside or disfigured the pure belief in the eternal, uncreated Spirit. The great powers and elements of nature, and the vital principle of production and procreation through all generations, then the celestial spirits, or the heavenly host (to speak the language of antiquity), the luminous choir of stars, which the whole ancient world regarded not as mere globes of light or bodies of fire, but as animated substances; next the Genii and tutelar spirits, and even the souls of the dead received now divine worship; and men, instead of honouring the Creator in these, and of regarding these in reference to their Creator, considered them as Gods. Such is, when we have once supposed that man had turned away from God to Nature, such is the natural origin of Polytheism, which in every nation assumed a different form according to the peculiar modes of life, and the prevailing principles of life, in each.

Among the Indians this ruling principle of existence was the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, which appears indeed to be the most characteristic of all their opinions, and was by its influence on real life, by far the most important. We must in the first place remember, and keep well in our minds, that, among those nations of primitive antiquity, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul was not a mere probable hypothesis, which, as with many moderns, needs laborious researches and diffuse argumentations in order to produce conviction on the mind. Nay, we can hardly give the name of faith to this primitive conception; for it was a lively certainty, like the feeling of one's own being, and of what is actually present; and this firm belief in a future existence exerted its influence on all sublunary affairs, and was often the motive of mightier deeds and enterprises than any mere earthly interest could inspire. I said above that the doctrine of the transmigration of souls was not unconnected with the Indian system of castes; for the most honourable appellation of a Brahmin is *Tvija*, that is to say, a second time born, or regenerated. On one hand this appellation refers to that spiritual renovation and second birth of a life of purity consecrated to God, as in this consists the true calling of a Brahmin, and the special purpose of his caste. On the other hand this term refers to the belief that the soul, after many transmi-

grations through various forms of animals, and various stages of natural existence, is permitted in certain cases, as a peculiar recompense, when it has gone through its prescribed cycle of migrations to return to the world, and be born in the class of Brahmins. This doctrine of the transmigration of souls through various bodies of animals or other forms of existence, and even through more than one repetition of human life, (whether such migrations were intended as the punishment of souls for their viciousness and impiety, or as trials for their further purification and amendment)—this doctrine which has always been, and is still so prevalent in India, was held likewise by the ancient Egyptians. This accordance in the faith of these two ancient nations, established beyond all doubt by historical testimony, is indeed remarkable; and even in the minutest particulars on the course of migration allotted to souls, and on the stated periods and cycles of that migration, the coincidence is often perfectly exact. How strangely now it this most singular error mixed up, I do not say with truth, but with a feeling that is certainly closely akin to primitive truth! When an individual of our own age, out of disgust with modern and well-known systems, or with the vulgar doctrines, and from a love of paradox, adopted this ancient hypothesis of the transmigration of souls; he merely considered

the bare transmutation of earthly forms.* But among those ancient nations this doctrine rested on a religious basis, and was connected with a sentiment purely religious. In this doctrine there was a noble element of truth—the feeling that man, since he has gone astray, and wandered so far from his God, must needs exert many efforts, and undergo a long and painful pilgrimage before he can rejoin the Source of all perfection;—the firm conviction and positive certainty that nothing defective, impure, or defiled with earthly stains can enter the pure region of perfect spirits, or be eternally united to God; and that thus, before it can attain to this blissful end, the immortal soul must pass through long trials and many purifications. It may now well be conceived, (and indeed the experience of this life would prove it,) that suffering, which deeply pierces the soul, anguish that convulses all the members of existence, may contribute, or may even be necessary, to the deliverance of the soul from all alloy and pollution, as, to borrow a comparison from natural objects, the generous metal

* Schlegel here alludes to the celebrated Lessing, who in his work entitled "The Education of the Human Race," had maintained the doctrine of the Metempsychosis, a doctrine doubly absurd in a Deist, like Lessing, for the metempsychosis was a philosophical, though false, explanation of the primitive and universal dogma of an intermediate or probationary state of souls.—*Trans.*

is melted down in fire and purged from its dross. It is certainly true that the greater the degeneracy and the degradation of man, the nearer is his approximation to the brute; and when the transmigration of the immortal soul through the bodies of various animals is merely considered as the punishment of its former transgressions, we can very well understand the opinion which supposes that man who, by his crimes and the abuse of his reason, had descended to the level of the brute, should at last be transformed into the brute itself. But what could have given rise to the opinion that the transmigration of souls through the bodies of beasts was the road or channel of amendment, was destined to draw the soul nearer to infinite perfection, and even to accomplish its total union with the Supreme Being, from whom, in all appearance, it seemed calculated to remove it further? And as regards a return to the present state and existence of man, what thinking person would ever wish to return to a life divided and fluctuating as it is, between desire and disgust, wasted in internal and external strife, and which, though brightened by a few scattered rays of truth, is still encompassed with the dense clouds of error;—even though this return to earthly existence should be accomplished in the Brahminical class so highly revered in India, or in the princely and royal race so highly favoured by fortune? There is in all this a strange mixture and confusion of

the ideas of this world with those of the next; and how the latter is separated from the former by an impassable gulf, they seem not to have been sufficiently aware. Both these ancient nations, the Egyptians as well as the Indians, regarded with few exceptions, the Metempsychosis, not as an object of joyful hope, but rather as a calamity impending over the soul; and whether they considered it to be a punishmment for earthly transgressions, or a state of probation—a severe but preparatory trial of purification; they still looked on it as a calamity; which to avert or to mitigate, they deemed no attempt, no act, no exertion, no sacrifice, ought to be spared.

In the manner, however, in which these two nations conceived this doctrine, there was a striking and fundamental difference; and if the leading tenet was the same among both, the views which each connected with it were very dissimilar. Deprived, as we are, of the old books and original writings of the Egyptians, we are unable perfectly to comprehend and seize their peculiar ideas on this subject, and state them with the same assurance as we can those of the Indians, whose ancient writings we now possess in such abundance, and which in all main points perfectly agree with the accounts of the ancient classics. But we are left to infer the ideas of the Egyptians on the Metempsychosis only from their singular treatment of the dead, and the

bodies of the deceased; from that sepulchral art (if I may use the expression) which with them acquired a dignity and importance, and was carried to a pitch of refinement, such as we find among no other people; from that careful and costly consecration of the corpse, which we still regard with wonder and astonishment in their mummies and other monuments. That all these solemn preparations, and the religious rites which accompanied them, that the inscriptions on the tombs and mummies had all a religious meaning and object, and were intimately connected with the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, can admit of no doubt; though it is a matter of greater difficulty to ascertain with precision the peculiar ideas they were meant to express. Did the Egyptians believe that the soul did not separate immediately from the body which it had ceased to animate, but only on the entire decay and putrefaction of the corpse? Or did they wish by their art of embalmment to preserve the body from decay, in order to deliver the soul from the dreaded transmigration? The Egyptian treatment of the dead would certainly seem to imply a belief that, for some time at least after death, there existed a certain connection between the soul and body. Yet we cannot adopt this supposition to an unqualified extent, as it would be in contradiction with those symbolical representations that so frequently occur in Egyptian art, and in which the soul

immediately after death is represented as summoned before the judgment-seat of God, severely accused by the hostile demon, but defended by the friendly and guardian spirit, who employs every resource to procure the deliverance and acquittal of the soul. Or did the Egyptians think that by all these rites, as by so many magical expedients, they would keep off the malevolent fiend from the soul, and obtain for it the succour of good and friendly divinities? Now that the gates of hieroglyphic science have been at last opened, we may trust that a further progress in the science will disclose to us more satisfactory information on all these topics.

The Indians, however, who ever remained total strangers to the mode of burial and treatment of the dead practised in Egypt, adopted a very different course to procure the deliverance of the human soul from transmigration:—they had recourse to philosophy—to the highest aspirings of thought towards God—to a total and lasting immersion of feeling in the unfathomable abyss of the divine essence. They have never doubted that by this means a perfect union with the Deity might be obtained even in this life, and that thus the soul, freed and emancipated from all mutation and migration through the various forms of animated nature in this world of illusion, might remain for ever united with its God. Such is the object to which all the different systems of Indian

philosophy tend—such is the term of all their enquiries. This philosophy contains a multitude of the sublimest reflections on the separation from all earthly things, and on the union with the God-head; and there is no high conception in this department of metaphysics, unknown to the Hindoos. But this absorption of all thought and all consciousness in God—this solitary enduring feeling of internal and eternal union with the Deity, they have carried to a pitch and extreme that may almost be called a moral and intellectual self-annihilation. This is the same philosophy, though in a different form, which in the history of European intellect and science, has received the denomination of *mysticism*. The possible excesses—the perilous abyss in this philosophy, have been in general acknowledged, and even pointed out in particular cases, where egotism or pride has been detected under a secret disguise, or where this total abstraction of thought and feeling has spurned all limit, measure, and law. In general however, the European mind, by its more temperate and harmonious constitution, by the greater variety of its attainments, and above all, by the purer and fuller light of revealed truth, has been preserved from those aberrations of mysticism which in India have been carried to such a fearful extent, not only in speculation, but in real life and practice; and which, transcending as they do all the limits of human

nature, far exceed the bounds of possibility, or what men have in general considered as such. And the apparently incredible things which the Greeks related more than two thousand years ago, respecting the recluses of India, or *Gymnosophists*, as they called those Yogis, are found to exist even at the present day; and ocular experience has fully corroborated the truth of their narratives.

END OF LECTURE IV.

LECTURE V.

A comparative view of the intellectual character of the four principal nations in the primitive world—the Indians, the Chinese, the Egyptians, and the Hebrews; next of the peculiar spirit and political relations of the ancient Persians.

As, after discord had broken out among mankind, humanity became split and divided into a multitude of nations, races, and languages, into hostile and conflicting tribes, castes rigidly separated, and classes variously divided; as indeed, when once we suppose this original division and primitive opposition in the human race, it could not be otherwise from the very nature and even destiny of man; so in a psychological point of view, the moral unity of the individual man was broken, and his faculties of will and understanding became mutually opposed, or followed contrary courses. The whole internal structure of human consciousness was deranged, and in the present divided state of the human

faculties, there is no longer the full play of the harmonious soul—of the once unbroken spirit—but its every faculty hath now but a limited, or, to speak more properly, one half of its proper power.

The restoration of the full life and entire operation of the divided faculties of the human soul must be considered now only as a splendid exception—the high gift of creative genius, and of a more than ordinary strength of character; and such a reunion of faculties must be looked upon as the high problem which constitutes the ultimate object and ideal term of all the intellectual and moral exertions of man. When in an individual a clear, comprehensive, penetrative understanding, that has mastered all sound science, is combined with a will not only firm, but pure and upright, such an individual has attained the great object of his existence; and when a whole generation, or mankind in general, present this harmonious concord between science on the one hand, and moral conduct and external life, or to characterize them by one word, the general will, on the other, which is often in utter hostility with science—we may then truly say that humanity has attained its destiny. The great error of ordinary philosophy, and the principal reason that has prevented it from accomplishing its ends, is the supposition it so hastily admits that the consciousness of man now entirely changed, broken and mutilated, is the

same as it was originally, and as it was created and fashioned by its Maker; without observing that, since the great primeval Revolution, man has not only been outwardly or historically disunited, but even internally and psychologically deranged. The moral being of man, a prey to internal discord, may be said to be quartered, because the four primary faculties of the soul and mind of man—Understanding and Will, Reason and Imagination, stand in a twofold opposition one to the other, and are, if we may so speak, dispersed into the four regions of existence. Reason in man is the regulating faculty of thought; and so far it occupies the first place in life and the whole system and arrangement of life; but it is unproductive in itself, and even in science it can pretend to no real fertility or immediate intuition. Imagination on the other hand is fertile and inventive indeed, but left to itself and without guidance, it is blind, and consequently subject to illusion. The best will, devoid of discernment and understanding, can accomplish little good. Still less capable of good is a strong, and even the strongest understanding, when coupled with a wicked and corrupt character; or should such an understanding be associated with an unsteady and changeable will, the individual destitute of character, is entirely without influence.

To prove moreover how all the other faculties of the soul, or the mind, elsewhere enume-

rated are but the connecting links—the subordinate branches* of those four primary faculties; how the general dismemberment of the human consciousness reaches even to them; how they diverge from one another, and appear still more split and narrowed; to prove this would lead me too far, and is the less necessary, as, in the peculiar character of particular ages or nations, the historical enquirer can observe but those four primary faculties mentioned above, as the intellectual elements prevalent in each. As in the intellectual character of particular men, or in any given system of human thought, fiction, or science (and these can be better described and more closely analyzed than the fleeting and transient phenomena of real life and the social relations); as in every such individual production, I say, of human thought and human action, either Reason will preponderate as a systematic methodizer and a moral regulator, or a fertile, inventive Imagination will be displayed, or a clear, penetrative understanding, or again a peculiar energy of will and strength of character will be observed; so the same holds good in the great whole of universal history—in the moral and intellectual existence—the character, or the mind of particular ages or nations in the ancient world.

* The four secondary faculties of human consciousness are, according to our author, the memory, the conscience, the impulses or passions, and the outward senses.—*Trans.*

This is apparent not only in the very various manner, in which sacred Tradition—the external word to man revealed—was conceived, developed and disfigured among each of those nations; but in the peculiar form and direction which the internal word in man—that is to say his higher consciousness and intellectual life assumed among each. Such an intellectual opposition evidently exists between those two great primitive nations already characterized, that inhabit the extreme East and South of Asia—an opposition between reason and imagination. In regard to the intellectual and moral character of nations as well as of individuals, Reason is that human faculty which is conversant with grammatical construction, logical inferences, dialectic contests, systematic arrangement; and in practical life it serves as the divine regulator, in so far as it adheres to the higher order of God. But when it refuses to do this, and wishes to deduce all from itself and its own individuality, then it becomes an egotistical, over-refining, selfish, calculating, degenerate Reason, the inventress of all the arbitrary systems of science and morals, dividing and splitting every thing into sects and parties. Imagination must not be considered as a mere faculty for fiction, nor confined to the circle of art and poetry—it includes a faculty for scientific discoveries, nor did a mind destitute of all imagination ever make a great scientific discovery. There is even a higher,

purely speculative fancy which finds its proper sphere in a mysticism, like the Indian, that has already been described. Even if a mysticism, like that which constitutes the basis of the Indian philosophy, were entirely free from all admixture of sensual feelings, and were entirely destitute of images, we should certainly not be right in refusing on that account to imagination its share in this peculiar intellectual phenomenon. That in the intellectual character of the Chinese, reason, and not imagination, was the predominent element, it would, after the sketch we have before given of that people, and which was drawn from the best and most recent sources and authorities, be scarcely necessary to prove at any length—so clearly is that fact established. Originally when the old system of Chinese manners was regulated by the pure worship of God, not disfigured as among other nations by manifold fictions, but breathing the better spirit of Confucius, it was undoubtedly in a sound, upright Reason, conformable to God, that the Chinese placed the foundation of their moral and political existence; since they designated the Supreme Being by the name of Divine Reason. Although some modern writers in our time have, like the Chinese, applied the term *divine reason* to Almighty God; yet I cannot adopt this Chinese mode of speech, since, though according to the doctrine from which I start, and the truth of which has been all along

pre-supposed, the living God is a spirit; yet it by no means follows thence that God is Reason or Reason God. If we examine the expression closely and in its scientific rigour, we can with as little propriety attribute to God the faculty of reason, as the faculty of imagination. The latter prevails in the poetical mythology of ancient Paganism; the former, when the expression is really correct, designates rationalism or the modern idolatry of Reason; and to this indeed we may discern a certain tendency even in very early times, and particularly among the Chinese. Among the latter people at a tolerably early period, a sound, just Reason conformable and docile to divine revelation was superseded by an egotistical, subtle, over-refining Reason, which split into hostile sects, and at last subverted the old edifice of sacred Tradition, to re-construct it on a new revolutionary plan.

Equally, and even still more strongly, apparent is the predominance of the imaginative faculty among the Indians, as is seen even in their science and in that peculiar tendency to mysticism which this faculty has imparted to the whole Indian philosophy. The creative fulness of a bold poetical imagination is evinced by those gigantic works of architecture which may well sustain a comparison with the monuments of Egypt; by a poetry, which in the manifold richness of invention is not inferior to that of the Greeks, while it often approximates

to the beauty of its forms; and, above all, by a mythology which in its leading features, its profound import, and its general connexion resembles the Egyptian, while in its rich clothing of poetry, in its attractive and bewitching representations, it bears a strong similarity to that of the Greeks. This decided and peculiar character of the whole intellectual culture of the Indians, will not permit us to doubt which of the various faculties of the soul is there the ruling and preponderant element.

A similar, and equally decided opposition in the intellectual character and predominant element of human consciousness is observed between the Hebrews and Egyptians; though this was an opposition of a different kind, and of a deeper import. To show this more clearly, I will take the liberty of interrupting for a moment the order I have hitherto followed, of characterizing each nation in regular succession, and with as much accuracy and fullness as possible; in order by a comparative view of the four principal nations of remote antiquity, to draw such a general sketch of the first period of universal history as may serve at once for a central point in our enquiries, and for the ground-work of subsequent remarks. Such a comparison will tend to facilitate our survey of the primitive ages of the world: and in this general combination of the whole, each part will appear in a clearer light.

If I wished to characterize in one word the peculiar bearing and ruling element of the Egyptian mind; however unsatisfactory in other respects such general designations may be—I should say that the intellectual eminence of that people was in its scientific profundity—in an understanding that penetrated or sought to penetrate by magic into all the depths and mysteries of nature, even into their most hidden abyss. So thoroughly scientific was the whole leaning and character of the Egyptian mind, that even the architecture of this people had an astronomical import, even far more than that of the other nations of early antiquity. I have already had occasion to speak of the deep and mysterious signification of their treatment of the dead. In all the natural sciences, in mathematics, astronomy, and even in medicine, they were the masters of the Greeks; and even the profoundest thinkers among the latter, the Pythagoreans, and afterwards the great Plato himself, derived from them the first elements of their doctrines, or caught at least the first outline of their mighty speculations. Here too, in the birth-place of hieroglyphics, was the chief seat of the Mysteries; and Egypt has at all times been the native country of many true, as well as of many false, secrets. These few remarks may here serve to characterize this people; we shall later have occasion to add many minuter traits to complete this brief sketch of the Egyptian intellect.

Very different was the character of the ancient

Hebrews, who, in science as well as in art, can sustain no comparison with those other nations we have spoken of, and to whom we must apply a very different criterion of excellence. The moral eminence of this people, or the part allotted to it in high historical destiny, lies rather in the sphere of will, and in a well-regulated conduct of the will. Moses himself was undoubtedly, as it is said of him, "versed in all the science of the Egyptians;" for he had received a completely Egyptian education, which, by the care of an Egyptian princess, was of the highest and politest kind, and consequently, as the customs of the country imply, extremely scientific. Even his name according to the credible testimony of several ancient writers, was originally Egyptian, and afterwards hebraized; for *Moyses*,* as he is called in the Greek version of the Seventy, signifies in Egyptian, *one saved out of the water*. But the Hebrew people were far from possessing that Egyptian science of which Moses was so great a master; on the contrary, the Jewish legislator seemed to consider the greater part of that foreign science, in which he himself was so well versed, as of little service to his object; and in many instances sought to withhold this knowledge from his nation. Many of the Mosaic precepts indeed, especially such as have a reference to external life, to subsistence, diet and health, and which are in part at least

* Μωϋσῆς.

founded on reasons of climate, are entirely conformable to Egyptian usages, and are found to have been practised among that people; for these ancient law-givers and founders of Asiatic states did not scruple to give even medical precepts in their codes of moral legislation, that embraced the minutest circumstances of life. But to these precepts and usages the Hebrew legislator has imparted in general a higher import and a religious consecration. We must not suppose, however, that he has taken all his laws from this source, or make this a matter of reproach to the Jewish law-giver, as many critics of our own times have done; for, to minds enslaved by the narrow spirit of the age, difficult, indeed, is it to transport themselves into that remote antiquity. It would be a great error, also, to suppose that all the science which Moses had acquired by his Egyptian education, he wished to conceal from his nation, and reserve for the secret use of himself and a few confidential friends. It is evident, if we regard the subject only in an historical point of view, that a higher and better element, completely foreign to the science of Egypt, animated and pervaded all the views and conduct of this great man, whether we consider him as the founder and law-giver of the Hebrew state, or as the guide and instructor of the Hebrew people. In the forty years' sojourn of Moses in the Arabian desert with Jethro, one of whose seven daughters

he married, and who has rightly been accounted an Emir, or petty pastoral prince of Arabia, this higher principle silently grew up and expanded in the breast of this exalted man, until it at last burst forth in all the majesty of divine power. All that appeared to Moses truly sound and excellent in Egyptian customs and science, or serviceable to his purpose, he adopted and used with choice and circumspection. But all that was incompatible with his designs, and which he knew to be corrupt, he strenuously rejected, or he gave to it a totally different application, and established a higher principle in its room.

In the same way he was not disconcerted by the secret arts of the Egyptian sorcerers, for it was no difficult matter for him to vanquish them in the presence of the king by the higher power of God. It is thus we should understand the conduct of Moses in reference to the science and modes of thinking of the Egyptians; and that conduct will be found not only perfectly irreproachable in a human point of view, but entitled to our warmest admiration. If for instance we suppose that Moses, the first and greatest writer in the Hebrew tongue, — the founder and legislator of that language also, was, if not the first that discovered, at least the first that fixed and regulated, the Hebrew alphabet, we may easily conceive him to have taken the first ten, as well as the last twelve Hebrew letters from the Egyptian hieroglyphics; for

even at that early period, the hieroglyphics, while they retained their original symbolical meaning, had acquired an alphabetical use. This supposition is at least extremely probable, for many of the Hebrew letters are found in precisely the same form in the hieroglyphical alphabet; though our knowledge of this alphabet is still so very imperfect, and though we have deciphered but perhaps a tenth part of all the various literal symbols which may there exist. But to continue our supposition, Moses did not wish to take from the Egyptian hieroglyphics more than the twenty-two literal signs; he neglected the other hieroglyphs and natural symbols, for he had no need of them. On the contrary, he studiously excluded all natural symbols from his religious system, and prohibited with inexorable severity the chosen people the use of images and all that was most remotely connected with such a service. He well foresaw that if he made the slightest concession on this point, and permitted the least indulgence, or left the slightest opening to the passion for natural and symbolical representations, it would be impossible to set any restraint on this indulgence, and that the Hebrews when they had once swerved from the path marked out for them, would follow the same course as the Pagan nations. The subsequent history of the Jewish nation sufficiently proves how important and necessary was that part of the

Mosaic legislation which proscribed all that was connected with the religious use of images. But wherein consisted the peculiar bent of mind, the moral and intellectual character traced out to the Hebrews by their legislator and all their Patriarchs? Completely opposed to the Egyptian science—to the Egyptian understanding, that dived and penetrated by magical power into the profoundest secrets and mysteries of nature, the ruling element of the Hebrew spirit was the *will*—a will that sought with sincerity, earnestness and ardour, its God and its Maker, far exalted above all nature, went after his light when perceived, and followed with faith, with resignation, and with unshaken courage, his commands, and the slightest suggestions of his paternal guidance, whether through the stormy sea, or across the savage desert. I do not mean to assert that the whole nation of the Jews was thoroughly, constantly, and uniformly actuated and animated with such a pure spirit and such pure feelings—many pages of their history attest the contrary, and but too well manifest how often they were in contradiction with themselves. But this and this alone was the fundamental principle, the first mighty impulse, the permanent course of conduct which Moses and the other leaders and chosen men anmog the Hebrews sought to trace out to their people — this was the abiding character, the great distinctive mark which they had stamped

upon their nation. This too, was the distinguishing character of all the primitive Patriarchs, as represented in the sacred writings of the Old Testament.

Independently of particular traits of national character, and the special destiny of nations, it is philosophically certain, or if we may so speak, it is a truth grounded on psychological principles, that the will and not the understanding is in man the principal organ for the perception of divine truths. And by this, we understand a will that seeks out with all the earnestness of desire the light of truth, which is God, and when that light has appeared clear, or begins to appear clear, follows with fidelity its guidance, and listens to the internal voice of truth and all its high inspirations. I affirm that in man the understanding is not the principal organ for the perception of divine truth—that is to say, the *understanding alone.* On the understanding alone, indeed, the light may dawn and may even be received—but if the will be not there—if the will pursue a separate and contrary course; that light of higher knowledge is soon obscured, and soon becomes clouded and unsteady; or, if it should still gleam, it is changed into the treacherous meteor of illusion. Without the co-operation of a good will, this light cannot be preserved or maintained in its purity; nay, the will must make the first advances towards truth; it must lay the first basis for the higher science of divine truth,

and religious knowledge. In other words, as the God whom we acknowledge and revere as the Supreme Being is a living God; so truth, which is God, is a living truth—it is only from life that it can be derived, by life attained, and in life learned. In the present state of man's existence, in this period of the world—a period of discord, of sunken power, of misery and delusion—a period, which, as the Indians designate our fourth and last epoch of the world by the name of Caliyug, is the period of predominant woe and misfortune; in this present life, the path marked out for man as leading to the knowledge of divine truth and to a higher life, is the path of patience, resignation, and perseverance in the struggle of life—a toilsome probation cheered and supported by hope. Desire or love is the beginning or root of all higher science or divine knowledge; perseverance in desire, in faith, and in the combat of life forms the mid-way of our pilgrimage; but the term of this pilgrimage is only a term of hope. This necessary period of preparation, of slow and irksome preparation, and gradual progression, cannot be avoided or overleaped by the most heroic exertions of man. The supreme perfection and full contentment of the soul—the intimate union of the spirit with God—and God himself cannot be thus grasped, wrested, and held fast by a violent concentration of all our thoughts on a single point, by a species of arro-

gated omnipotence—the self-potency of obstinate and tenacious thought; as the Indian philosophy believes, and as the modern German philosophy* for some time seemed to believe, or at least attempted.

The real character, and even history of the Jewish people are frequently misunderstood, and ill appreciated; because the men of our times, who in all their speculations, and whatever may be the nature of their opinions, incline ever more and more to the spirit of *the absolute*, are unable to seize and enter into the idea of that epoch of preparation and progressive advancement which was as indispensable for the perfection of intellect and knowledge, as of moral life itself. The whole historical existence and destiny of the Hebrews is confined within one of those great epochs of providential dispensation—it marks but one stage in the wonderful march of humanity towards its divine goal. The whole existence of this people turned on the pivot of hope, and the keystone of its moral life projected its far shadows into futurity. Herein consists the mighty difference between the sacred traditions of the Hebrews and those of the other ancient Asiatic nations. When we examine the primitive records and sacred books

* Schlegel here alludes to that sort of intuitive mysticism in matters of religion, which was the boast of the adherents of Schelling's philosophy.—*Trans.*

of these nations, who were so much nearer the fountain-head of primitive revelation than the later nations of the polished West;—when we leave out of sight the moral precepts and ordinances of liturgy comprised in these books; we shall find their historical view is turned backward towards the glorious Past, and that they breathe throughout a melancholy regret for all that man and the world have since lost. And undoubtedly these primitive traditions contain many ancient and beautiful reminiscences of primeval happiness, for even Nature herself was then far different from what she is at present, more lovely, more akin to the world of spirits, peopled and encompassed with celestial genii; and not only the small garden of Eden, but all creation, enjoyed a state of Paradisaic innocence and happy infancy, ere strife had commenced in the world, and ere death was known. Out of the multitude of these holy and affecting recollections, and out of the whole body of primitive traditions, Moses, by a wise law of economy, has retained but very little in the revelation, which was specially destined for the Hebrew people, and has communicated only what appeared to him absolutely and indispensably necessary for his nation, and for his particular designs, or rather the designs of God, in the conduct of that nation. But the little he has said—the significant brevity of the first pages of the Mosaic history, involves much profound truth for us in these

later ages, and comprises very many solutions as to the great problems of primitive history, did we but know how to extract the simple sense with like simplicity. But every thing else, and in general the whole tenour of the Mosaic writings, like the existence of the Hebrew nation, was formed for futurity—and to this were the views of the Jewish legislator almost exclusively directed. And as all the sacred writings of the Old Testament, which, by this direction towards futurity, were even in their *outward form* so clearly distinguishable from the sacred books and primitive records of other ancient nations; as all these sacred writings, I say, from the first lawgiver, who in a high spiritual sense, delivered from the Egyptian bondage of nature his people chosen for that especial object, down to the royal and prophetic Psalmist, and down to that last voice of warning and of promise that resounded in the desert, were both in their form and meaning eminently prophetic; so the whole Hebrew people may, in a lofty sense, be called prophetic, and have been really so in their historical existence and wonderful destiny.

To these four nations, whom we have compared, in respect to the different shape and course which the primitive revelation and sacred tradition assumed among them, as well as in respect to the diversities in their intellectual development,—the contrarieties in the internal Word, and higher consciousness of each;—to

these nations, in order to complete the instructive parallel, we may now add a fifth — the Persians; a people which in some points was similar, in others dissimilar to one or other of these nations, and which bearing a nearer affinity to some in its doctrines and views of life, or even in its language and turn of fancy, and more closely connected with others in the bonds of political intercourse, may be said to occupy a middle place among these nations. In ancient history, the Persians form the point of transition from the first to the second epoch of the world; and in this they hold the first place, in so far as they commenced the career of universal conquest; a passion which passed from them to the Greeks, and from these in a still fuller extent to the Romans, like some noxious humour — some deadly disease transmitted with augmented virulence through every age from generation to generation; and even in modern times, this hereditary malady in the human race has again broken out.

But, considered in a spiritual point of view, and with regard to their religion and sacred traditions, the Persians must be classed with the four great nations of the primitive world, and can be compared with them only; for, in this respect, they so totally differed from the Phœnicians and Greeks, that no comparison can be instituted between them and the latter; and no parallel, where the objects are so unlike,

can be productive of any useful result. To the Indians they bore the strongest resemblance in their language, poetry, and poetic Sagas; their conquests, which stretched far into the provinces of central Asia, brought them in contact with the remote eastern Asia, and the celestial Empire of the Chinese, so completely sequestered from the western world; with Egypt they were involved in political contests, till they finally subdued it—and in their religious doctrines and traditions, they more nearly approximated to the Hebrews; or their views of God and religion were more akin to the Hebrew doctrines than those of any other nation. Of the King of Heaven, and the Father of eternal light, and of the pure world of light, of the eternal Word by which all things were created, of the seven mighty spirits that stand next to the throne of Light and Omnipotence, and of the glory of those heavenly hosts which encompass that throne; next, of the origin of evil and of the Prince of darkness, the monarch of those rebellious spirits—the enemies of all good; they in a great measure entertained completely similar, or at least very kindred, tenets to those of the Hebrews. That, with all these doctrines much may have been, or really was, combined, which the ancient Hebrews and even we would account erroneous, is very possible, and indeed may almost naturally be surmised; but this by no means impairs that strong historical resemblance

we here speak of. A circumstance well worthy of observation is the manner in which Cyrus and the Persians are represented in the historical books of the Old Testament, and are there so clearly distinguished from all other Pagan nations. Among the latter they can with no propriety be numbered; nay, they felt towards the Egyptian Idolatry as strong an abhorence, and in political life manifested it more violently, than the Hebrews themselves. During their sway in Egypt, this Idolatry was an object of their persecution, and under Cambyses, they pursued a regular plan for its utter extirpation. Even Xerxes, in his expedition into Greece, destroyed many temples and erected fire-chapels in the whole course of his march; for it cannot be questioned but religious views were principally instrumental in giving birth to the Persian conquests, at least to those of an earlier date. This is a circumstance which should not be overlooked, if we would rightly understand the whole course of these events, and penetrate into the true spirit and original design of these mighty movements in the world. From their fire-worship, we must not be led to accuse the ancient Persians of an absolute deification of the elements, and of a sensual idolatry of nature; in their religion, which was so eminently spiritual, the earthly fire and the earthly sacrifice were but the signs and the emblems of another devotion and of a higher Power. Symbols

and figurative representations were in general not so rigidly excluded from their religious system, as from that of the Hebrews. Yet, among the Persians, these had a totally different character from those in the Indian or Egyptian idolatry. The generous character of the ancient Persians, their life and their manners, which display such an exalted sense of nature, possess in themselves something peculiarly winning and captivating for the feelings. The leading result of the few observations we have made may be comprised in the following general remarks:—

If a poetical recollection of Paradise sufficed for the moral destiny of man—if the pure feeling, enthusiasm, and admiration for sideral nature were alone capable of revealing all the glory of the celestial abodes, and of the heavenly hosts, of opening to mental eyes the gates of eternal light—if this were the one thing necessary, and of the first necessity for man—if it were, or could be conformable to the will of God, that the eternal empire of pure light should be diffused over the whole earth by the enthusiasm of martial glory, by the generous valour and heroic magnanimity of a chivalric nobility, such as the Persian undoubtedly was—then indeed would the Persians hold the pre-eminence, or be entitled to claim the first rank among those four nations that were nearest the source of the primitive revelation. But it is otherwise or-

dained; the path alone fit and salutary for man, and evidently marked out by the will of God, is the path of patience and perseverance—the unremitting struggle of slow preparation. Thus, as we may easily conceive, it was not the Persians, distinguished as that nation was by its noble character, and by its spiritual views of life; it was not the Egyptians, versed and initiated as they were in all the mysteries of nature and all the depths of science;—but it was the politically insignificant, and, in an earthly point of view, the far less important, almost imperceptible, people of the Hebrews, that were chosen to be the medium of transition—the connecting link between the primitive revelation and the full development of religion in modern times, and its last glorious expansion towards the close of ages. They are now the carriers, and, we may well say, the porters of the designs of Providence, destined to bear the torch of primitive tradition and sacred promise from the beginning to the consummation of the world:—while the once magnanimous nation of the Persians has sunk from that pure knowledge of truth, and those high spiritual notions of religion it once entertained, down to the anti-christian superstition of Mahomet; and the profound people of Egypt has become totally extinct, and is not to be traced even in the small community of Coptic Christians, who have preserved a feeble remnant of the ancient language.

Since now this general sketch of the various and contrary directions which the human mind followed in the first ages of history has been rendered more clear and definite by a comparative view of the five principal nations of the primitive world, it only remains for us to subjoin some important traits in the history of each, to complete this picture of the earliest nations; in order to pass over, along with the Persians, to the second period of the ancient world—a period which is so much nearer to us, and appears so much more clear and open to our apprehension.

The origin of ancient heathenism we must seek among the Indians, and not among the Chinese, for the reason we have before alleged: namely, that, in the primitive ages, the Chinese observed a pure, simple, and Patriarchal worship of the Deity; and it was only when under the first general and powerful Emperor of China, the rationalism introduced by the sect of Taosse had brought about a complete revolution in the whole system of Chinese faith, manners, and customs, that a real form of Paganism—the Indian superstition of Buddha—was subsequently introduced into that country. This subversion of the whole system of ancient government—of ancient doctrines—and of what among the Chinese was inseparably allied with the latter, the early system of writing, was a real revolution in the public mind. As the general burning of the sacred

books, and the persecution and execution of many of the learned were measures directed solely against the school of Confucius, that adhered to the old system of morals and government; it is by no means an arbitrary and baseless hypothesis to ascribe to the antagonist party, the rationalist sect of Taosse, a great share in this violent moral and political revolution; inasmuch as the powerful Emperor Chi-ho-angti must have been quite in the interest of this party. Although the erection of the great wall of China, and the settlement of a Chinese colony in Japan, gave external splendour to his reign; yet at home its despotic violence rendered it thoroughly revolutionary. And so this mighty catastrophe, which occurred two thousand years ago in the Chinese empire, widely removed as it is from us by the distance of space and time, and different as is the form under which it occurred, bears nevertheless no slight resemblance or analogy to much we have seen and experienced in our own times. To explain the contradiction which seems involved in the fact, that on one hand we have commended that pure, simple, and Patriarchal worship of the Deity by the Chinese in the primitive period; and much that denoted the comparatively high state of civilization among this people, together with a science perverted and degenerate indeed, yet carried to a high degree of refinement; and that, on the other hand, we have pointed out many

things in their primitive writing-system, which displayed a great rudeness and poverty of ideas, and a very confined circle of symbols, we may observe that it is with China, as with many other ancient civilized countries, where in the background of a ruling and highly polished people, a close investigation will discover a race of primitive inhabitants more barbarous, or at least less advanced in intellectual refinement. Such a race is mentioned by historians as existing in different provinces of China under the name of Miao—they are precisely characterized as an earlier, less polished race of inhabitants, and they have indeed been preserved down to later times. The historical enquirer meets almost always in the first ages of the world with two strata of nations, consisting of an elder and a younger race;—in the same way as the geologist in his investigation of the earth's surface can clearly distinguish a twofold formation of mountains and separate periods in the formation of that surface. Thus in China the more polished new-comers and founders of the subsequent nation and state, accommodated themselves in many respects to the manners and customs, the language and even perhaps symbolical writing of these half savages, as the Europeans have partly done, when they have wished to civilize and instruct the Mexicans and other barbarous nations; and as men must always act in similar cases, if they would wish success

to crown their benevolent endeavours. All researches into the origin of the Chinese nation and Chinese civilization ever conduct the enquirer to the north-west, where the province of Shensee is situated, and to the countries lying beyond. Thus this only serves to confirm the opinion, highly probable in itself, and supported by such manifold testimony, of the general derivation of all Asiatic civilization from the great central region of Western Asia.

Agreeably to this opinion, the Indian traditions, as we have already mentioned, deduce the historical descent of Indian civilization from the northern mountainous range of the Himalaya and the country northwards; and in support of this tradition, we may cite the vast ruins, the immense subterraneous temples hewn out of the rock, in the neighbourhood of the old and celebrated city of *Bamyan*. Though the latter city be not in the proper India, but more northward towards Cabul, in Hindu Cutch, still its ruins present to the eye of the spectator the peculiar forms and structure of the architecture and colossal images of India, (whereof they contain a great abundance,) such as are observed in the other great monumental edifices of the Indians at Ellore, in the centre of the southeru province of Deccan, in the Isles of Salsette and Elephanta in the neighbourhood of Bombay, in the island of Ceylon, and near Mavalipuram on the coast of Madras. All these immense tem-

ples, which have been hewn in the cavities of rocks, or have been cut out of the solid rock; and where often many temples are ranged above and beside the other, together with the buildings for the use of the Brahmins and the swarms of pilgrims, occupy in length and breadth the vast space of half a German mile, and even more. These temples form the regular places of Hindoo pilgrimage, whither immense multitudes of pilgrims flock from all the countries of India; and an English writer who wrote as an eye witness, estimated the multitude at the almost incredible number of two millions and a half. Together with the colossal images of gods and of sacred animals, such as the elephant and the nandi, or the bull sacred to Siva, we find the rocky walls of these subterraneous temples adorned with an almost incalculable number of carved figures, representing various scenes from the Indian mythology. These figures jut so prominently from the rock, that it would almost seem as if their backs alone joined the wall. The multitude of figures is exceedingly great, and in the ruins near Bamyan, the number is computed at twelve thousand; though this calculation may not perhaps be very accurate, for the thick forests which surround these now desolate ruins are often the repair of tigers and serpents, and thus all approach to them is attended with danger. Besides in the ruins of Bamyan many of the figures, and even some of

the colossal idols, have been destroyed by the Mahometans; for whenever their armies chance to pass by these ruins, they never fail to point their cannon against the images of those fabulous divinities, which all Mahometans hold in so much abhorrence.

As to architecture, the perfection which this art attained among the Indians is evident from the beautiful workmanship and varied decoration of their columns, whole rows of which, like a forest of pillars support the massy roof of upper rock. Notwithstanding the essential difference which must exist in the architecture of temples hewn out of rocks, or constructed in the cavities of rocks, we shall find that the prevailing tendency in Indian architecture is towards the pyramidal form. On the other hand, it is observed that the art of vaulting appears to have been less known, or at least not to have attained great perfection, or been in frequent use. We find, too, among these monuments, vast walls constructed out of immense blocks of stone, and rudely cut fragments of rock, not unlike the old Cyclopean structures. The amateurs of such subjects have acquired a more accurate knowledge of them by the splendid illustrations which the English have published; for a mere verbal description can with difficulty convey a just notion of the nature and peculiar character of this architecture. Of the political history of India, little can be said, for the Indians scarcely

possess any regular history—any works to which we should give the denomination of historical; for their history is interwoven and almost confounded with mythology, and is to be found only in the old mythological works, especially in their two great national and epic poems, the Ramayan and the Mahabarat, and in the eighteen Puranas (the most select and classical of the popular and mythological legends of India), and perhaps in the traditionary history of particular dynasties and provinces; and even the works we have mentioned are not merely of a mytho-historical, but in a great measure of a theological and philosophical purport. The more modern history of Hindostan, from the first Mahometan conquest at the commencement of the eleventh century of our era, can indeed be traced with pretty tolerable certainty; but as this portion of Indian history is unconnected with, and incapable of illustrating the true state and progress of the intellectual refinement of the Hindoos, it is of no importance to our immediate object. The more ancient history of that country, particularly in the earlier period, is mostly fabulous, or, to characterize it by a softer, and at the same time, more correct name, a history purely mythic and traditionary; and it would be no easy task to divest the real and authentic history of ancient India of the garb of mythology and poetical tradition; a task which at least has not yet been executed with adequate critical acumen.

Chronology, too, shares the same fate with the sister science of history, for in the early period it is fabulous, and in the more modern, it is often not sufficiently precise and accurate. The number of years assigned to the first three epochs of the world must be considered as possessing an astronomical import, rather than as furnishing any criterion for an historical use. It is only the fourth and last period of the world —the age of progressive misery and all-prevailing woe, which the Indians term Caliyug, that we can in any way consider an historical epoch; and this, the duration of which is computed at four thousand years, began about a thousand years before the Christian era. Of the progress and term of this period of the world, considered in reference to the history of mankind, the Indians entertain a very simple notion. They believe that the condition of mankind will become at first much worse, but will be afterwards ameliorated. The regular historical epoch when the chronology of India begins to acquire greater certainty, and from which indeed it is ordinarily computed, is the age of King Vikramaditya, who reigned in the more civilized part of India, somewhat earlier than the Emperor Augustus in the West, perhaps about sixty years before our era. It was at the court of this monarch that flourished nine of the most celebrated sages and poets of the second era of Indian literature; and among these was Calidas, the author of the beautiful dramatic poem of Sacontala, so gene-

rally known by the English and German translations. It was in the age of Vikramaditya, that the later poetry and literature of India, of which Calidas was so bright an ornament, reached its full bloom. The elder Indian poetry, particularly the two great epic poems above-mentioned, entirely belong to the early and more fabulous ages of the world; so far at least as the poets themselves are assigned to those ages, and figure in some degree, as fabulous personages. We may, however, observe that in the style of poetry, in art, and even in the language itself, there reigns a very great difference between these primitive heroic poems, and the works of Calidas and other contemporary poets—the difference is at least as great as that which exists between Homer and Theocritus, or the other Bucolick poets of Greece. The oldest of the two epic poems of the Indians, the Ramayana by the poet Valmiki, celebrates Rama, his love for a royal princess, the beautiful Sita, and his conquest of Lanka, or the modern Isle of Ceylon. Although in the old historical Sagas of the Indians, we find mention made of far-ruling monarchs and all-conquering heroes; still these traditions seem to shew, as in the instance first cited, that in the oldest, as in the latest, times prior to foreign conquest, India was not united in one great monarchy, but was generally parcelled out into a variety of states; and this fact serves to prove that such has ever been in gene-

ral the political condition of that country. The whole body of ancient Indian traditions and mythological history is to be found in the other great epic of the Indians, the Maha-Barata, whose author, or at least compiler, was Vyasa, the founder of the Vedanta philosophy, the most esteemed, and most prevalent of all the philosophical systems of the Hindoos. This leads us to observe a second remarkable, and singularly characteristic, feature in Indian intellect and Indian literature, so widely remote from the relation between poetry and philosophy among other nations, particularly the Greeks. This is the close connection, and almost entire fusion of poetry and philosophy among this people. Many of their more ancient philosophical works were composed in metre, though they possess productions of a later period, which display the highest logical subtilty and analysis. Their great old poems, whatever may be the beauty of the language, and the captivating interest of the narrative, are generally imbued with, and pervaded by, the most profound philosophy; and among this people, even the history of Metaphysics ascends as far back as the mythic ages. This at least holds good of the authors, to whom the invention of the leading philosophical systems has been ascribed; although the subsequent commentaries belong to a much later and more historical period. Thus the Mahabarata contains as an episode a didactic poem, or philosophi-

cal dialogue between the fabulous personages and heroes of the epic, known in Europe by the name of the Bhagavatgita, and which has recently been ably edited and expounded in Germany, by Augustus William Von Schlegel, and William Von Humboldt. The leading principles of the Vedanta philosophy are copiously set forth in this poem, which may be regarded as a manual of Indian mysticism; for such is the ultimate object of all Indian philosophy; and of this peculiar propensity of the Hindoo mind we have already cited some remarkable traits. For the accomplishment of our more immediate object, and in order rightly to understand the true place which the intellectual culture of India occupies in primitive history, a general knowledge of Indian philosophy is far more important and necessary, than any minute analysis and criticism on the manifold beauties of the very rich poetry of that country; and this philosophy we shall now endeavour to characterize according to its various systems, and in its main and essential features.

END OF LECTURE V.

LECTURE VI.

Of the Hindoo Philosophy.—Dissertation on Languages.—Of the peculiar political Constitution and Theocratic Government of the Hebrews.—Of the Mosaic Genealogy of Nations.

THE Indian philosophy, from the place it holds in the primitive intellectual history of Asia, and from the insight it gives us into the character and peculiar tendency of the human mind in that early period, possesses a high, almost higher, interest than that offered by the beautiful and captivating poetry of this ancient people. However, even the poetry of the Indians contains much that refers to, or bears the stamp of, that peculiar mystical philosophy which we have more than once spoken of. We shall give a more correct and comprehensive idea of the Indian philosophy, if we observe, beforehand, that the six Indian systems which are the most prevalent and the most celebrated, and which,

though in many points differing from the Vedas, are not to be regarded as entirely reprehensible or heterodox, the six Indian systems, we say, must be classed in couples, and that the first of each pair treats of the beginning of the subject discussed in the second, and the second contains the development and extension of the principles laid down in the first, or applies those principles to another and higher object of enquiry. In the whole Indian philosophy, there are in fact only three different modes of thought, or three systems absolutely divergent, and we shall give a sufficiently clear idea of these systems, if we say that the first is founded on nature,—the second on thought, or on the thinking self; and the third attaches itself exclusively to the revelation comprised in the Vedas. The first system which seems to be one of the most ancient, bears the name of the Sanchyá philosophy—a name which signifies "the philosophy of Numbers." This is not to be understood in the Pythagorean sense, that numbers are the principle of all things, or according to the very similar principle laid down in the Chinese books of I—King, where we find the eight koua, or the symbolic primary lines of all existence. But the Sanchyá system bears this name because it reckons successively the first principles of all things and of all being to the number of four or five-and-twenty. Among these first principles, it assigns the highest place to Nature—the se-

cond to understanding, and by this is meant not merely human understanding, but general and even Infinite Intelligence; so that we may consider this system as a very partial philosophy of Nature; and indeed it has been regarded by some Indian writers as atheistical—a censure in which the learned Englishman, Mr. Colebrooke, (to whose extracts and notices we are indebted for our most precise information on this whole branch of Indian literature)* seems almost inclined to concur. This system was however, by no means a coarse materialism, or a denial of the Divinity and of every thing sacred. The doubts expressed in the passages cited by Mr. Colebrooke, are directed far more against the Creation than against God; they regard the motive which could have induced the Supreme Being, the Spirit of Infinite perfection to create the external world, and the possibility of such a creation.

The Sanchyá Philosophy would be more properly designated in our modern Philosophic phraseology as a system of complete Dualism, where two substances are represented as co-existent—on one hand, a self-existent energy of Nature, which emanated, or eternally emanates,

* The valuable articles by this great Sanscrit scholar on Hindoo philosophy, have excited a greater sensation in France and Germany, than in his own country. It would be well if the Asiatic Society were to publish those articles in a separate form. —*Trans.*

from itself; and on the other hand, eternal truth, or the Supreme and Infinite Mind.

The Indian Philosophers in general were so inclined to regard the whole outward world of sense as the product of illusion, as a vain and idle apparition, that we can well imgaine they were unable to reconcile the creation of such a world (which appeared to them a world of darkness, or perhaps, on a somewhat higher scale, as an intermediate state of illusion) with their mystical notion of the infinite perfection of the Supreme Being and Eternal Spirit. For even in ethics, they were wont to place the idea of Supreme Perfection in a state of absolute repose, but not (at least to an equal degree) in the state of active energy or exertion. Great as the error of such a system of dualism may be—there is yet a mighty difference between a philosophy which denies, or at least misconceives, the Creation, and one which denies the existence of the Deity; for such atheism never occurred to the minds of those philosophers. The doctrine of a primary self-existing energy in Nature, or of the eternity of the Universe, may in a practical point of view, appear as gross an error; but in philosophy we must make accurate distinctions, and forbear to place this ancient dualism on the same level with that coarse materialism—that destructive and atheistic Atomical philosophy, or any other doctrines professed by the later sects of a dialectic Rationalism.

Valuable, undoubtedly, as are such extracts and communications from the originals in a branch of human science still so little known, yet they will not alone suffice, and, without a certain philosophic flexibility of talent in the enquirer, they will fail to afford him a proper insight into the true nature, the real spirit and tendency of those ancient systems of philosophy. That the Indian philosophy, even when it has started from the most opposite principles, and when its circuitous or devious course has branched more or less widely from the common path, is sure to wind round, and fall into the one general track—the uniform term of all Indian philosophy—is well exemplified by the second part of the Sanchyá system (called the Yoga philosophy), where we find a totally different principle proclaimed; and while it utterly abandons the primary doctrine of a self-existent principle in Nature laid down in the first part of the philosophy, it unfolds those maxims of Indian mysticism which recur in every department of Hindoo literature. That total absorption in the one thought of the Deity, that enti[illegible] abstraction from all the impressions and notions of sense—that suspension of all outward, and in part even of inward, life effected by the energy of a will tenaciously fixed and entirely concentrated on a single point; and by which, according to the belief of the Indians, miraculous power and supernatural knowledge are attained,—are

held up in the second part of the Sanchyá system as the highest term of all mental exertion. The word Yoga signifies the complete union of all our thoughts and faculties with God—by which alone the soul can be freed—that is, delivered from the unhappy lot of transmigration; and this, and this only, forms the object of all Indian philosophy.

The Indian name of Yogi is derived from the same word, which designates this philosophy. The Indian Yógi is a hermit or penitent who, absorbed in this mystic contemplation, remains often for years fixed immoveably to a single spot. In order to give a lively representation of a phenomenon so strange to us, which appears totally incredible and almost impossible, although it has been repeatedly attested by eye-witnesses, and is a well-ascertained historical fact; I will extract from the drama of Sacontalá by the poet Calidas, a description of a Yogi, remarkable for its vivid accuracy, or, to use the expression of the German commentator, its fearful beauty. King Dushmanta enquires of Indra's charioteer the sacred abode of him whom he seeks; and to this the charioteer replies:* "a little beyond the grove, where you see a pious Yogi, motionless as a pollard, holding his thick bushy hair and fixing his eyes on

* We have transcribed Sir William Jones's own words, as given in his Translation of Sacontalá.—*Trans.*

the solar orb. Mark:—his body is half covered with a white ant's edifice made of raised clay; the skin of a snake supplies the place of his sacerdotal thread, and part of it girds his loins; a number of knotty plants encircle and wound his neck; and surrounding birds' nests almost conceal his shoulders." We must not take this for the invention of fancy, or the exaggeration of a poet; the accuracy of this description is confirmed by the testimony of innumerable eye-witnesses, who recount the same fact, and in precisely similar colours. During that period of wonderful phenomena and supernatural powers—the first three centuries of the Christian church—we meet with only one Simon Stylites, or column-stander;—and his conduct is by no means held up by Christian writers as a model of imitation, but is regarded, at best, as an extraordinary exception permitted on certain special grounds. In the Indian forests and deserts, and in the neighbourhood of those holy places of pilgrimage mentioned above, there are many hundreds of these hermits—these strange human phenomena of the highest intellectual abstraction or delusion. Even the Greeks were acquainted with them, and, among so many other wonders, make mention of them in their description of India under the name of the Gymnosophists. Formerly such accounts would have been regarded as incredible and as exceeding the bounds of possibility; but such conjectures

can be of no avail against historical facts repeatedly attested and undeniably proved. Now that men are better acquainted with the wonderful flexibility of human organization, and with those marvellous powers which slumber concealed within it, they are less disposed to form light and hasty decisions on phenomena of this description. The whole is indeed a magical intellectual self-exaltation, accomplished by the energy of the will concentrated on a single point: and this concentration of the mind, when carried to this excess, may lead not merely to a figurative, but to a real intellectual self-annihilation, and to the disorder of all thought, even of the brain. While on the one hand we must remain amazed at the strength of a will so tenaciously and perseveringly fixed on an object purely spiritual, we must, on the other hand, be filled with profound regret at the sight of so much energy wasted for a purpose so erroneous, and in a manner so appalling.

The second species of Indian philosophy, totally different from the other two kinds, and which proceeds not from Nature, but from the principle of thought and from the thinking self, is comprised in the Nyayà system, whose founder was Gautama—a personage whom several of the earlier investigators of Indian literature, particularly Dr. Taylor, in his Translation of the "Prabodha Chandrodaya,"—(page 116.) have con-

founded with the founder of the Buddhist sect, as both bear the same name. But a closer enquiry has proved them to be distinct persons; and Mr. Colebrooke himself finds greater points of coincidence or affinity between the Sanchyá philosophy and Buddhism, than between the latter and the Nyayà system. This Nyayà philosophy, proceeding from the act of thought, comprises in the doctrine of particulars, distinctions and subdivisions, the application of the thinking principle; and this part of the system embraces all which among the Greeks went under the name of logic or dialectic; and which with us is partly classed under the same head. Very many writings and commentaries have been devoted to the detailed treatment and exposition of these subjects, which the Indians seem to have discussed with almost the same diffuseness, or at least copiousness, as the Greeks. Like the Indians, the learned Englishman, who has first unlocked to our view this department of Indian literature, has paid comparatively most attention to this second part of the Nyayà philosophy. But all this logical philosophy, though it may furnish one more proof (if such be neccessary) of the extreme richness, variety and refinement of the intellectual culture of the Hindoos, yet possesses no immediate interest for the object we here propose to ourselves. Mr. Colebrooke remarks, however, that the fundamental tenets of this philosophy com-

prise, as indeed is evident, not merely a logic in the ordinary acceptation of the word, but the metaphysics of all logical science. On this part of the subject, I could have wished that in the authentic extracts he has given us from the Sancrit originals, he had more distinctly educed the leading doctrines of the system, and thus furnished us with the adequate data for forming a judgment on the general character of this philosophy, as well as on its points of coincidence with other systems, and with the philosophy of the Buddhists. For although it appears to be well ascertained that the religion of Buddha sprang out of some perverted system of Hindoo philosophy; yet the points of transition to such a religious creed existing in the Indian systems of philosophy, have not yet been clearly pointed out. The Vedanta philosophy must here evidently be excepted; for to this Buddhism is as much opposed as to the old Indian religion of the Vedas. Moreover that endles confusion and unintelligibleness of the Buddhist metaphysics, which we have before spoken of, may first be traced to the source of Idealism; though in the progress of that philosophy, many errors have been associated with it—errors even which, in its origin, were most widely removed from it; for every system of error asserts and even believes that it is perfectly consistent, though in none is such consistency found.

The basis and prevailing tendency of the

Nyayà system (to judge from the extracts with which we have been furnished) is most decidedly ideal. On the whole we can very well conceive that a system of philosophy beginning with the highest act of thought, or proceeding from the thinking self, should run into a course of the most decided and absolute idealism, and that the general inclination of the Indian philosophers to regard the whole external world of sense as vain illusion, and to represent individual personality as absorbed in the God-head by the most intimate union, should have given birth to a complete system of self-delusion—a diabolic self-idolatry, very congenial with the principles of that most ancient of all anti-christian sects—the Buddhists.

The Indian authorities cited by Colebrooke, impute to the second part of the Nyayà philosophy a strong leaning to the atomical system. We must here recollect that, as the Indian mind pursued the most various and opposite paths of enquiry even in philosophy, there were besides the six most prevalent philosophic systems, recognized as generally conformable to religion, several others in direct opposition to the established doctrines on the Deity and on religion. Among these the Charvacâ philosophy, which, according to Mr. Colebrooke, comprises the metaphysics of the sect of Jains, deserves a passing notice. It is a system of complete materialism founded on the atomical doctrines, such as

Epicurus taught, and which met with so much favour and adhesion in the declining ages of Greece and Rome;—doctrines which several moderns have revived in latter times, but which the profound investigations of natural philosophy, now so far advanced, will scarcely ever permit to take root again.

The third species or branch of Indian philosophy, is that which is attached to the Vedas, and to the sacred revelation and traditions they contain. The first part of this philosophy,—the Mimansá, is, according to Mr. Colebrooke, more immediately devoted to the interpretation of the Vedas, and most probably contains the fundamental rules of interpretation, or the leading principles, whereby independent reason is made to harmonize with the word of revelation conveyed by sacred tradition. The second or finished part of the system is called the Vedanta philosophy. The last word in this term, "Vedanta," which is compounded of two roots, is equivalent to the German word ende (end), or still more to the Latin finis, and denotes the end or ultimate object of any effort; and so the entire term Vedanta will signify a philosophy which reveals the true sense, the internal spirit, and the proper object of the Vedas, and of the primitive revelation of Brahma comprised therein. This Vedanta philosophy is the one which now generally exerts the greatest influence on Indian literature and Indian life;

and it is very possible that some of the six recognized, or at least tolerated, systems of philosophy may have been purposely thrown into the back-ground, or, when they clashed too rudely with the principles of the prevailing system, have been softened down by their partisans, and have thus come down to us in that state. A wide field is here opened to the future research and critical enquiries of Indian scholars.

This Vedanta philosophy is in its general tendency, a complete system of Pantheism; but not the rigid, mathematical, abstract, negative Pantheism of some modern thinkers; for such a total denial of all Personality in God, and of all freedom in man, is incompatible with the attachment which the Vedanta philosophy professes for sacred tradition and ancient mythology; and accordingly a modified, poetical, and half-mythological system of Pantheism may here naturally be expected, and actually exists. Even in the doctrine of the immortality of the soul and of the Metempsychosis, the personal existence of the human soul, inculcated by the ancient faith, is not wholly denied or rejected by this more modern system of philosophy; though on the whole it certainly is not exempt from the charge of Pantheism. But all the systems of Indian philosophy tend more or less to one practical aim—namely the final deliverance and eternal emancipation of the soul from the old

calamity—the dreaded fate—the frightful lot—of being compelled to wander through the dark regions of Nature—through the various forms of the brute creation—and to change ever anew its terrestrial shape. The second point in which the different systems of Indian philosophy mostly agree is this, that the various sacrifices prescribed for this end in the Vedas, are not free from blame or vice, partly on account of the effusion of blood necessarily connected with animal sacrifice—and partly on account of the inadequacy of such sacrifices to the final deliverance of the soul; useful and salutary though they be in other respects.

The general and fundamental doctrine of the Metempsychosis has rendered the destruction of animals extremely repulsive to Indian feelings, from the strong apprehension that a case may occur where, unconsciously and innocently, one may violate or injure the soul of some former relative in its present integument. But even the Vedas themselves inculcate the necessity of that sublime science which rises above nature, for the attainment of the full and final deliverance of the soul; as is expressed in an old remarkable passage of the Vedas, thus literally translated by Mr. Colebrooke.* "Man must recognize the soul—man must separate it

* See Colebrooke's article on the Vedas in the 8th volume of Asiatic Researches,

from nature—then it comes not again—then it comes not again." These last words signify, then the soul is delivered from the danger of a return to earth—from the misfortune of transmigration, and it remains for ever united to God; an union which can be obtained only by that pure separation from nature, which is that sublimest science, invoked in the first words of this passage.

Animal sacrifices for the souls of the departed, particularly for those of deceased parents, which were regarded as the most sacred duty of the son and of the posterity, were among those religious usages which occupied an important place in the Patriarchal ages, and were most deeply interwoven with the whole arrangement of life in that primitive period, as is evident from all those Indian rites, and the system of doctrines akin to them. These sacrifices are certainly of very ancient origin, and may well have been derived from the mourning Father of mankind, and the first pair of hostile brothers. To these may afterwards have been added all that multitude of religious rites, and doctrines, or marvellous theories respecting the immortal soul and its ulterior destinies. Hence the indispensable obligation of marriage for the Brahmins, in order to insure the blessing of legitimate offspring, regarded as one of the highest objects of existence in the Patriarchal ages, for the prayers of the son only could obtain the de-

liverance, and secure the repose, of a departed parent's soul; and this was one of his most sacred duties. The high reverence for women, among the Indians, rests on the same religious notion; as is expressed by the old poet in these lines.

"Woman is man's better half,
Woman is man's bosom friend,
Woman is redemption's source,
From Woman springs the liberator."

This last line signifies, what we mentioned above, that the son is the Liberator appointed by God, to deliver by prayer the soul of his deceased father. The poet then continues;—"Women are the friends of the solitary—they solace him with their sweet converse; like to a father, in discharge of duty, consoling as a mother in misfortune."

We should scarcely conceive it possible (and it certainly tends to prove the original power, copiousness and flexibility of the human mind,) that, by the side of a false mysticism totally sunk and lost in the abyss of the eternally incomprehensible and unfathomable, like the Indian philosophy, a rich, various, beautiful and highly wrought poetry should have existed. The Epic narrative of the old Indian poems bears a great resemblance to the Homeric poetry, in its inexhaustible copiousness, in the touching simplicity of its antique forms, in just-

ness of feeling, and accuracy of delineation. Yet in its subjects, and in the prevailing tone of its Mythological fictions, this Indian Epic poetry is characterized by a style of fancy incomparably more gigantic, such as occasionally prevails in the mythology of Hesiod—in the accounts of the old Titanic wars—or in the fabulous world of Æschylus, and of the Doric Pindar. In the tenderness of amatory feeling, in the description of female beauty, of the character and domestic relations of woman, the Indian poetry may be compared to the purest and noblest effusions of Christian poesy; though, on the whole, from the thoroughly mythical nature of its subjects, and from the rhythmical forms of its speech, it bears a greater resemblance to that of the ancients. Among the later poets, Calidas, who is the most renowned and esteemed in the dramatic poetry of the Indians, might be called by way of comparison, an Idyllic and sentimental Sophocles. The poetry of the Indians is not a little indebted to the genius of their beautiful language, which bears indubitable traces of the same generous and lofty poetical spirit; and it may be therefore necessary, in this general sketch of the primitive state of the human mind, to make a few observations on this very remarkable language.

In its grammatical structure the language of India is absolutely similar to the Greek and Latin, even to the minutest particulars. But

the grammatical forms of the Sanscrit are far richer and more varied than those of the Latin tongue, and more regular and systematic than those of the Greek. In its roots and words the Sanscrit has a very strong and remarkable affinity to the Persian and Germanic race of languages; an affinity which furnishes interesting disclosures, or gives occasion at least for instructive comparisons, on the progress of ideas among those ancient nations, and, as one and the same word is sometimes extended, sometimes contracted in its meaning or applied to kindred objects—reveals the first natural impressions, or primary notions of life in those early ages. To prove more clearly, by one or two examples, this affinity between the languages of nations so widely removed from one other, and almost separated by the distance of two quarters of the globe, and to shew the important data which the discovery of such facts furnishes to history, I will mention, as a striking instance, that the German word *mensch* (man) perfectly agrees in root and signification with the Indian word, *manuschya*, with this only difference, that in the Sanscrit the latter word has a regular root, and is derived from the word *manu*, which means spirit. Thus the word mensch (man) in its primitive root signifies a being endowed with spirit by way of pre-eminence above all earthly creatures. It is evident, too, from this, that the Latin word *mens* (mind) is of a cognate kind,

and belongs to the same family of words; for, in these philological comparisons, the members of one radical word, scattered through different languages, serve when combined to illustrate each other. To cite an instance of a remarkable extension and contraction of meaning in one and the same word, we may remark that the same word which in the German *loch*, signifies the space of a narrow aperture, and in the Latin *locus*, comprehends the general notion of space, as well as of a particular place, means the universe in the Sanscrit *lokas*. Thus the Sanscrit word *trailokas* or *trailokyan*, signifies the three worlds or the triple world—the world of truth or eternal being, the world of illusion or vain appearance, and the world of darkness;—a division which constitutes one of the main points in the Indian philosophy, and is expressed by the two Sanscrit words *trai* and *lokas*, which are at the same time also Latin and German. I will adduce but one more example. As mostly the ancient nations of Asia, and likewise of Europe, were led by a certain natural feeling and a not erroneous instinct, (totally independent of the nomenclature and classifications of our natural history,) to regard the bull the most useful and important of all the animals which man has domesticated, as the representative of earthly fertility, and (as it were) the primary animal of the earth, and afterwards made that animal the emblem of all earthly existence and earthly energy; so it is

extraordinary to see, (as Augustus William Schlegel has shewn by an interesting comparison of the words which designate either of these objects in various languages of a kindred stem,) it is extraordinary to see what mutual light and illustration they reflect on each other. The Indian and Persian word, *gau*, with which the German *kuh*, (cow) perfectly coincides, quite agrees with the Greek word for earth, in the old Doric form of γα: the Latin *bos*, (ox) in its inflection *bovis* or *bove*, belongs to a whole family of Sanscrit words, such as *bhu*, *bhuva*, *bhumi*, which signify the earth or earthly, or whatever is remotely connected therewith. So originally in this language one and the same word served to denote the earth and the bull. Comparisons of this sort, when not strained by etymological subtilty, but founded on matter of fact and clear self-evident deductions, may offer much curious illustration of the state of opinion, and the nature and connexion of ideas in the primitive and mythic ages, or may serve at least to give us a clearer and more lively insight into the secret operations of the human mind, and into the modes of thinking prevalent among ancient nations. And, besides the few instances here cited, we might adduce many hundred examples of a similar kind.

As language in itself forms one of the corner-stones of man's history (and that not the least important), and as the different tongues spread

in such amazing variety over the inhabited globe, are essentially connected with universal history, and the history of particular races; it is necessary to say a few words on this subject, not that we would plunge deeper, than is here expedient, into the vast and immense labyrinth of languages; but in order to shew the point of view whence the philosophic historian should take his survey, if he would gain a clear and comprehensive notion of this otherwise immeasurable chaos. Perhaps the shortest way for this would be to figure to oneself all the different dialects and modes of speech diffused over the habitable globe, under the general image of a pyramid of languages of three degrees, separated one from the other by a very simple principle of division. The broad basis of this pyramid would be formed by those languages whose roots and primitive words are mostly monosyllabic, and which either are entirely without a grammar like the Chinese language, or at best display only the rude lineaments of a very simple and imperfect grammatical structure. The languages belonging to this class are by far the most considerable in number, and the most widely spread over the four quarters of the globe; and if, in a general philological investigation, we would wish to reduce these to any species of classification, we must adopt a geographical mode of arrangement, and designate them, for example, as the languages of Northern and Eastern Asia, of America, and of Africa.

The Chinese must be considered as the most important and remarkable language of this class, precisely because it best answers to the character of a monosyllabic speech totally destitute of grammar, and has attained to as high a degree of refinement and perfection as languages of this kind are susceptible of. This is the stage of infancy in language, as children's first attempts at speech almost always incline to monosyllables—it is the cry of nature which breaks out in these simple sounds, or the infantine imitation of some natural sound. This primitive character is still to be clearly traced in the Chinese; although a very artificial mode of writing, and the high degree of refinement to which science has been carried, have given a mighty extension, and a quite conventional character, to this infant language. For any parallels or analogies which may be drawn between the periods of natural life and the epochs of intellectual culture must never be understood in an exact and literal sense.

The next degree in this pyramid of speech is occupied by the noble languages of the second class, and this race of languages, which are connected with each other by strong and manifold ties of affinity, are the Indo-Persic, the Græco-Latin, and the Gothico-Teutonic.* Here the

* These are usually termed the Indo-Germanic race of languages.—*Trans.*

roots are, for the most part at least, dyssyllabic; and these roots, which are by this means internally flexible, and become as it were living and productive, afford room and occasion for a more varied grammatical structure. The distinguishing character of these languages is a very artificial grammar, which enters so completely into the primary formation of these languages, that the nearer we approach their original the more regular and systematic do we find their structure. In their progress these languages are characterized by a poetical fullness and variety in the forms of narration, and even by a rigid precision in scientific discussions.

The third and last class are the Semitic languages, as they are styled—the Hebrew and the Arabic, which, together with their kindred dialects, form the summit or apex of this pyramid. In these languages the ruling principle is that all the roots must be tri-syllabic, for each of the three letters, of which the root is regularly composed, counts for a syllable, and is articulated as such. Whatever exceptions from this rule exist, must be treated as exceptions only. It cannot well be doubted that this principle of tri-syllabic roots is purposely wrought into the whole internal structure of these languages, and perhaps not without some deep significancy—some presentient feeling implied by that triplicity

of roots.* In these languages the verb is the first principle of derivation—the root from which every thing is deduced, and hence a certain rapidity, fire, and vivacity in the expression. But with such formal regularity the rich, full, elaborate grammatical forms and structure which distinguish the languages of the Indo-Greek race, are not at all compatible;—these tri-syllabic tongues have a certain tendency to monotony, and do not certainly possess that poetical variety, and that flexible adaptation to scientific purposes, which characterize the second class of languages. The general characteristic of the Semitic tongues is their peculiar fitness for prophetic inspiration and for profound symbolical import—this is their special character. We speak here of the language itself, and of its internal structure, and not of the spirit which may direct it; and I shall only add that the character we have here assigned to the Semitic languages is according to the declaration of many of the most competent judges, more uniformly perceptible in the Arabic than in the Hebrew, although the former has received a totally different application, and has undergone a very diversified culture. Thus the Hebrew tongue was eminently adapted

* Schlegel here supposes that the triplicity of roots in the Semitic languages contains a mystic allusion to the Tri-une Godhead, the root and principle of all existence.

to the high spiritual destination of the Hebrew people, and was a fit organ of the prophetic revelation and promises imparted to that nation; and, even in this respect, this Semitic language is worthy of being considered the summit of the pyramid of human speech. But it never can be regarded as the basis of that pyramid, nor the root whence all other tongues have sprung, as many scholars in former times conceived—an opinion which would seem tacitly to imply that Adam could have spoken no other language in Paradise but the Hebrew. But this language of the first man created by God—this language which God himself had taught him—this word of Nature which the Deity imparted to man together with the dominion over all other creatures, and over the whole visible world, may have been neither the Hebrew nor the Indian, nor any of the other known or existing languages of the earth. Possibly it was not a speech which we could learn or understand, or which, according to the present scheme of language, we can even conceive or imagine. In the same way no one is capable of proving or discovering the geographical site of the one lost source in Paradise, whence those four rivers took their rise, which are in part to be still traced on the earth. As to the Hebrew language, I think that a deeper inquiry would shew that it is not so far removed from the Indo-Greek family; and that it is even partially related to it, although

this affinity may be at first very much concealed by the great difference of structure, and by the total diversity of grammatical forms. In general we must not endeavour to enforce, with too rigid uniformity and too systematic precision, the division of languages here marked out. It suffices to adhere to one general point of survey; but in other respects so luxuriant, so various, so irregular has been the growth of the human mind in the region of languages, that it may be compared to the expansive life of free, uncultivated nature, to the wild variety of the thick-grown forest or of the flowery meadow.

To the second order of languages of the Indo-Greek race, *probably* belongs the great Sclavonian family of languages, which, after the others, would form the fourth member in this class; but a definite and decisive judgment on this matter, I must leave to those philologists who are perfectly conversant with this branch of human speech. Between the second and third class of languages, there are a multitude of intermediate tongues which have sprung up out of that intermixture of races and nations, occurring at all periods of history, and necessarily affecting more or less language itself. I allude particularly to such languages as are not perfectly monosyllabic, and which have nevertheless a very simple and imperfect, or even a very irregular, strange, and awkward grammatical structure. Such for instance are some of the

American languages, which in this respect at least cannot be ranked in the third class, while they do not bear a closer, or at all close, affinity to those of the second. Most of the fragments of the earlier languages of Europe which are still extant, belong to this intermediate class of tongues partaking of both those species, or at least holding a middle place between them. Such are the Celtic or Gælic languages, the Finnish and other ancient remnants of language, which must not escape the study of the philologist, whose judgment is too frequently warped by some patriotic partiality or some learned predilection.

The noble languages of the second class have from a remote antiquity become indigenous to Europe, and are there now generally prevalent. The other fragments of speech which are to be found on our Continent by the side of these, either bear to them a remote affinity like the various Celtic or Gælic dialects, or lead the enquirer to the great Asiatic, perhaps even to the African family of tongues; for we could hardly expect to find a native race of languages peculiar to this small quarter of the globe, which holds the lowest place in point of historical antiquity. From the historical connexion between the North of Africa, and the Southern coasts of Western Europe, especially the Hesperian Peninsula, (a connection which has subsisted from the remotest ages, and has been renewed so

frequently, and in such various forms), one might be induced to suppose that the existence of this intercourse would have been attested by an affinity between the languages of the two countries. But the ablest scholars and critics cannot trace in the Basque tongue any affinity with the primitive African family, though they can discover in it an analogy with the Scythian race of Finnish languages. The *Magiar* language at the other eastern extremity of Europe is most decidedly an Asiatic tongue, belonging to that class which prevails in the central regions of Asia; but in its grammatical structure it bears some analogy to the languages of the second class. If, in conclusion I might be allowed to hazard a conjecture, I should say that nothing would more materially contribute to a comprehensive knowledge of the whole system of human language, as well as to a deeper insight into its internal principles and structure, than the success of the now rising school of Egyptian philologists, who, in deciphering the hieroglyphics by the aid of the Coptic, endeavour to give us a more accurate knowledge, or at least a more minute conception, of the old Egyptian tongue. And if we would venture the attempt of approximating nearer to the primitive speech (the lost or extinct source of all languages), we must start from four different quarters, and thread our way not only through the Sanscrit and Hebrew languages,

but through the primitive Chinese and the old Egyptian, as far as we can trace the latter.

How extremely alike ancient Egypt and India were to each other, not only in their political Institutions, but in their system of Idolatry, in their fundamental doctrines of belief, and in their general views of life, we have had ample opportunity of satisfying ourselves in the present age, when both these countries have been more accurately surveyed, and more closely investigated. In a remarkable expedition which occurred in our own times, this strong religious sympathy was strikingly displayed in a spontaneous and instantaneous burst of feeling. When, in the course of the French war in Egypt, an Indian army in British pay there landed, and, ascending up the country, came before the old monuments of Upper Egypt, the soldiers prostrated themselves on the earth, believing they had once more found the Deities of their native land. Great, however, as the resemblance between the two nations may be, they are still characterized by perceptible differences. On the one hand the Egyptian mind, so far as it has been delineated by the Greeks, appears to have been more deeply conversant and initiated in natural science: and on the other hand, the Egyptian idolatry was of a more decided cast, and was even more material in its fundamental errors than the Indian. The worship of animals, especially, was far more general,

and was not confined to the god Apis, who may be compared to the Nandi, the bull sacred to Siva, but branched out into a variety of other forms. In the progress of Idolatry it needs came to pass that what was originally revered only as the symbol of a higher principle was gradually confounded or identified with that object and worshipped, till this error in worship led to a more degraded form of Idolatry; for it should be remembered that as error is not merely the absence of truth, but a false and counterfeit imitation of the truth, it has, like the latter, a principle of permanent growth and internal development. Several writers, who, in a general review of all heathen religions, have attempted to classify them after the manner of naturalists, assign the lowest place to the Fetish worship so called, which they rank immediately below the worship of animals. They make the essence of this Fetish worship to consist in the divine adoration of a lifeless, corporeal object; while they place on higher degrees, in this scale of Pagan error, the sensual Nature-worship—the apotheosis of particular men—and the adoration of the elements, the stars, and the different powers of Nature. However just and correct this view of the subject may otherwise be, it should be remembered that the question agitated is not only what were the objects of divine worship, but what were the views, intentions, and doctrines connected with that worship. For

it is in these moral views we must look, either for the half-effaced vestige of ancient truth, or for the full enormity — the profound abyss of error. When we come to examine more closely the accounts of that Fetish worship (so called) which is most widely diffused though the interior of Africa, and prevails among some American tribes, and nations of the North East of Asia; it is easy to perceive, that magical rites are connected with it, and that all these corporeal objects are but magical instruments and conductors of magical power; and that the religion of these nations, sunk undoubtedly to the lowest grade of idolatry, comprises nothing beyond the rude beginnings of a Pagan magic, such as in all probability was practised by the *Cainites,* according to historical indications mentioned in an earlier part of this work. That the Egyptian mind had a certain leaning towards magic, though towards a magic of a very different, more comprehensive, and even more profound and scientific nature, cannot be called in question; for all the Hebrew, Greek, and native vouchers and authorities are unanimous in the assertion.

But if the different religions of Paganism must be classed according to their *outward rites* and *outward objects of worship*, the diversity of sacrifices would constitute a far better and more important standard of classification. We are taught that a difference in the mode of sacri-

fice was the principal cause of the dispute between the first two hostile brothers among men. Although, if we were to judge from first impressions and according to human feelings, no sacrifice is so filial, so simple, so appropriate, as that of the first fruits of the earth in returning Spring, (such for instance as the flower-offering of the pious Brahmins, or a similar oblation of thanksgiving among the ancient Persians and other nations); still on account of their deeper import and typical character, the pre-eminence has ever been allotted to animal-sacrifices; and these among the most civilized nations of Pagan antiquity have ever held the foremost place. Of this kind is the great sacrifice of the horse* in India, where in ancient times the bull was offered in sacrifice, till the destruction of the latter animal was severely prohibited, and came to be considered as a grievous crime. But there was ever a symbolical meaning attached to this sort of sacrifice,† and the victim selected as it was out of the purest and noblest species of domestic animals that surround man (such as the bull,

* The Aswameda.

† The reader may derive both pleasure and instruction from the perusal of a most masterly Treatise on Sacrifices, by the late Count Maistre, inserted at the end of the 2nd volume of his *Soirées de St. Petersbourg*. No where have the learning, the eloquence, the bold and profound philosophy of the noble author been more strikingly displayed, than in that short but admirable tract.—*Trans.*

the horse or the lamb), was looked upon only as the representative of another, and the emblem of a far higher victim.

It is an error to consider ancient Paganism as nothing more than mere poetry or agreeable fiction. The rites of the ancient Polytheism had very distinct and practical objects in view; and were intended either to *propitiate* the malignant powers of darkness, or to obtain by their agency preternatural power, or on the other hand, to conciliate the favour and appease the anger of the Deity. And for this object the Heathens shrunk from no expedient—deemed no price—no victim too costly, as the existence of human sacrifices, and especially the sacrifice of children may serve to convince us; and I cannot conclude this first part of the ancient history of the world, without bestowing a more particular examination on this extreme aberration of Paganism, which passed by inheritance from the remoter ages to the second, more civilized, and, (in many respects) milder era of history. The species of human sacrifice most widely diffused among all the Phænician nations was that in which the idol Moloch, heated from below, grasped in his glowing arms the infant victim. Even in the Punic city, Carthage, this cruel custom long prevailed, and was for a long time secretly practised under the Roman domination. These sacrifices existed among the Greeks and Romans, no less than among the

Indians and Egyptians; and the Chinese, so far at least as my acquaintance with their authentic records extends, are the only people among whom I do not recollect meeting with any mention of this kind of sacrifice. But in the civilized states of Greece and Rome, this ancient custom was in later and milder times gradually abolished, or silently supplanted by some equivalent.

Besides the sacrifice of children, there was another species which was customary and particularly striking, and in one respect even more worthy the historian's attention—I mean the sacrifice of pure youths. I may here again enforce the maxim which I have before laid down—namely, that error is the most appalling when it is connected in its origin, or mixed up in its principle, with some confused notion—some profound, though obscure, feeling of the truth. Bearing this in mind, we shall find that the enigmatic lamentation of Lamech* over his mysterious slaying of a stripling, occurring in the Mosaic

* "And Lamech said to his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice, ye wives of Lamech, hearken to my speech; for I have slain a man to the wounding of myself, and a stripling to my own bruising."—GEN. iv 23. This obscure text has long perplexed the Commentators:—Schlegel, I think has furnished an explanation as solid as it is ingenious. Thus Lamech to whom the introduction of polygamy is generally ascribed, was probably, also, the founder of human sacrifices. According to our great poet, lust sits enthroned hard by hate.—*Trans.*

account of the Cainites, would seem to indicate that human sacrifices, and especially this particular kind, had their origin among the race of Cain, deeply imbued even at that early period with anti-christian errors; and that an unhappy delusion—a confused anticipation of a real necessity and of a future reality, contributed to the institution of these sacrifices. Of that great mystery of truth, which the holy Patriarch of the Hebrews, with a prophetic intuition, had discerned in the sacrifice of his well-beloved son commanded him by God, but through the divine mercy not consummated—of this great mystery, we say, a diabolic imitation may have led to the human sacrifices by the early Heathens. But these sacrifices were more widely diffused, even in the Druidical North, and they continued down to a much later period than is commonly supposed, or at present asserted. Thus, for instance, the anti-christian Emperor Julian sought to revive them, in order to promote the infernal purposes of his dark magical rites. We are so habituated to look on the divinities and beautiful fables of ancient Greece, as the fairy creations of poetry, that we are painfully surprised when we unexpectedly stumble on some historical fact, which discloses the true spirit and internal essence of polytheism—the fact, for instance, that Themistocles himself, the deliverer of Greece, offered up three youths in sacrifice.

The profound abyss of error, in which the most civilized nations of ancient Heathenism had sunk and were lost, becomes the more apparent, the more closely it is investigated and the more fully it is understood. And on this account, we should learn to see how necessary and salutary was that slow progression—that gradual preparation for a brighter futurity, wherein, as I above stated, consisted the peculiar destination and spiritual career of the Hebrew people. It is only from this its peculiar destination for the Future, the Hebrew people presents so high an interest to historical philosophy, and holds the lofty place assigned to it in the first period of human civilization. The later destinies of the Jewish nation, and the particular events and characters in their later annals, are subjects of the highest moment in a history of religion; for they can be rightly understood and fully appreciated only by their practical application, and profound symbolical reference to the circumstances of Christianity. But it is only the political constitution of the Jewish state in the earliest period of its history — a constitution which was so peculiar and unique in itself, so entirely without a parallel—that can be the appropriate subject of consideration in this general review of history; because this constitution was connected with the prophetic calling of the Hebrew people, and even bore a prophetic character itself. This constitution has been called

a theocracy, and so it was in the right and old signification of that word, by which was meant a government under the special and immediate providence of God. But in the now ordinary acceptation of the term, which implies a sacerdotal empire or dominion, the Jewish state was at no time and by no means a theocracy. Moses was no more a priest than a king; and after him all those men of Desire, as they were called from the first circumstances of their institution, or men of the desert, because after a preparation in the solitude of the desert, they led and conducted the people in a literal or figurative sense, through the wilderness—all these men appointed by God, and without any other title or insignia but the staff, which as pilgrims they brought out of the desert, governed and directed the people under the immediate providence of God. If on a certain occasion one of the prophets girded on the sword and led out an army—this was only a transient instance; and the prophets in general were nothing more than the men of God, and the divinely appointed conductors of the people. When the wish in which the Hebrews had so long indulged of having a king, like the heathen nations, was at last gratified; a wish which in the higher views of Holy Writ, was regarded as the culpable illusion of a carnal sense;—the last of the prophets formed a party, and constituted in a very peculiar and singular manner, a species of political Opposition, which

was acknowledged to be, and was in fact, perfectly legitimate and just. And when some of them, like Elias for instance, had received from God the supreme and immediate power over life and death, as the distinct badge of dominion; we cannot wonder that men should have followed them, the people have been at their bidding, and kings themselves, even though they followed not always their counsels, have hearkened at least to their warning voice. If those who are so fond of playing the part of oppositionists in every country, could only once rise superior to vulgar forms and formulas, and not every where seek for the echo of their modern opinions, an attentive study of the character of Elias would hold up to their admiring view an oppositionist, who in energy of conduct, and in burning zeal for the cause of truth and justice, or in other words, of God, could not be perhaps easily equalled by any historical personage whether of ancient republics, or of modern monarchies.

After the Jewish state had become a kingdom of no very great dimensions, it shared the destiny of most of the petty states in those regions; and was first a province of the Assyro-Babylonish empire, then became subject to the Persian monarchs, and afterwards to the Greek kings of Syria and Egypt, till with these it was finally swallowed up in the vast empire of all-conquering Rome.

In that restoration of the Jewish state which the Maccabees accomplished in the last period of the Greek domination over Judea, the High-Priest acquired a concurrent political power; a power which he even still retained under the oppressive protectorate of the Romans, though his functions, which were those of a legislator and supreme judge, were confined to the internal government of the state. But this does not constitute a really sacerdotal dominion, and the term theocracy is as little applicable to such an order of things, as to the Greek Patriarchate in the Turkish empire. However, the holy city of Jerusalem, along with Solomon's old, mighty and symbolical temple (whose deep import and proper signification the Jews themselves at a later period no longer understood), still continued to be the main centre of the old national existence and ancient recollections of the Hebrews, as well as of their future hopes and prophetic promises. Even after the fearful destruction of Jerusalem, this emblematic idea of the holy city still lived in the recollection of mankind, and a long time afterwards was, in Christian Europe, an animating incentive to the warlike nations of the Middle Age.

In conclusion, we must add some observations, referring not so much to the Jewish people and their history, as to their most ancient historical books, and to those general views of mankind which they contain, so far as such

views relate to the general history of the primitive ages, and are connected with the philosophy of history. In the same way as it is neither necessary nor practicable to regard the Hebrew tongue as the general root or primal source of all the languages spoken on the earth, because it was the organ of divine revelation; so the Mosaic genealogy of nations can with as little propriety be made the basis of a general history of the world; as has in earlier times been so often attempted, but never accomplished without much violence to the text. Although it would be difficult to find in the primitive records of the other Asiatic nations an historical survey of all the nations on the globe, at once so clear, luminous, and instructive; yet the Mosaic revelation had a far different object in view than to furnish a school-compendium of historical learning. This historical genealogy, which in its way cannot be too highly esteemed, was evidently destined by Moses more immediately for his own people, and his own Book of the law; and in his account of the origin of nations, the sacred historian proceeded on views and principles very different from ours. For instance, with us it is the affinity of languages, which forms the chief clue in the arrangement and classification of the different races of mankind; and, according to this principle, we rank the Hebrews with the Phœnicians, and regard them as kindred nations. But in the

Mosaic history these two nations, separated by mutual hostility, stand at the widest distance one from the other; for in manners, religion, and feelings, they were diametrically opposed.

In this investigation, indeed, historical circumstances may often occur—such as the popular commotions and intermixture of nations happening at all periods of the world—by which the question of the origin and affinity of different races undergoes considerable modifications, and the whole subject is rendered unsusceptible of a systematic division and arrangement. It often happens that one race adopts the language of another, without on that account losing its national identity, or being totally confounded with the other; for, on the contrary, its moral or intellectual character bears the clear traces of its original descent; so that here, at least, language alone will decide nothing. Often a less numerous tribe will stamp its own native moral and intellectual character on a whole people. In general the descent of nations can be clearly traced and demonstrated in those cases only, where the race has been kept up pure, and all marriage and connection with other nations been strictly prevented. But such has been the case among certain nations only; and even in those countries, where it was the law, it was not in every instance rigidly observed, nor constantly maintained; as is exemplified in the frequent intermarriages of the Hebrews with the Phœnicians,

severely prohibited as such intermarriages were. The ancient law-givers attached, indeed, a very high importance to lineage, as is proved by all those restrictive laws on marriage, which were destined to preserve the purity of descent; but they set a far higher value on the patrimonial inheritance of ancient customs, institutions, doctrines, and intellectual qualities, as constituting the true essence of national character, and determining the rank which one race should hold above another. By Moses, in particular, this intellectual character of the different races —their feelings—modes of thinking—the whole spirit which animated them, in a word — the chain of sacred tradition, and its transmission and preservation among the different nations— all these are regarded of primary importance, and they alone furnish us with a clue to the discovery of his views.

The great middle country in Western Asia, where the true Eden, the original abode of the first man, and great progenitor of mankind, was situated, forms the central point in the general historical survey of Moses. The wide-spread race of Japhet comprehends the Caucasian nations in the North, and all its contiguous regions, and also those in the central Asia;—nations which were sound, vigorous, comparatively speaking, less corrupt, and by no means entirely barbarous: but which were debarred from that near and immediate participation in the sacred Tra-

ditions of primitive revelation, enjoyed by the peoples of the Semitic race in that midland country, whose distinctive character and high pre-eminence, according to Moses, consisted in this very participation. To the South, the race of Cham includes the degenerate, corrupt, and ungodly Egypt (a country which in its native language bore the name of Chemi), and beyond this, all the African tribes devoted to the dark rites of magic. How entirely subjective in itself—how exclusively adapted to his own people, and his own national object, is the genealogy of nations by Moses, may be proved among other things by the fact that, while many great nations in remoter lands, or in the distant Eastern Asia, cannot in this historical survey be traced without difficulty to their proper place, or forced therein without violence to the text, twelve or thirteen generations are given of the kindred Arabian branch, or of the hostile Phœnician race. If regarded in this simple point of view, the Mosaic genealogy of all the nations throughout the inhabited globe will be found very clear, and, though the names of some particular races remain matter of doubt, this summary is in general pefectly intelligible, and throws a broad light on the history of mankind.

END OF LECTURE VI.

LECTURE VII.

General considerations upon the nature of man, regarded in an historical point of view, and on the two-fold view of history. — Of the ancient Pagan Mysteries. — Of the universal Empire of Persia.

Instead of the Mosaic genealogy of nations, commented on in a hundred different ways, and interpreted according to the received views of each individual—a genealogy which was considered as the necessary basis of every universal history, and which by the most false and arbitrary methods was violently strained into an adaptation to all the data of history, evidently contrary to the real views and mighty object of its inspired author;—instead of this genealogy, we say, the sacred records of divine truth furnish us with a far more profound principle—a principle highly simple and comprehensive, and which is perfectly applicable to the philosophy of history. This is that principle laid down in

that revelation, at the commencement of all history, as the one wherein consists the peculiar nature — the true essence—and the final destiny of man—I mean his likeness to his Creator. Now it is this principle which forms the ground-work of our whole plan—and now that we have reached the conclusion of the first period of history, and are about to pass to the second, it may be proper to examine more minutely the nature of this principle, and to give an accurate definition of it.

According to the different notions entertained of man's nature, there are but two opposite views of history— two mighty and conflicting parties in the department of historical science. It is quite unnecessary to observe that we include not, in either class, such writers as, confining themselves to a bare detail of facts, indulge not in any general historical views, or even such as, vacillating in their opinions, have no clear, definite, and consistent views on the subject. According to one party, man is merely an animal, ennobled and gradually disciplined into reason, and finally exalted into genius; and therefore the history of human civilization is but the history of a gradual, progressive, and endless improvement. This theory may in a certain sense be termed the liberalism of historical philosophy; and no one perhaps has developed it with such clearness and mathematical rigour, as a very celebrated French writer, entirely

possessed with this idea, and who indeed became in his time a martyr to these principles.*

In the contests of opinion, which embrace the general relations of society, it is far less those dogmas in which each individual seeks light, aid, strength and repose for his feelings and his conscience, his inward struggles and his final hopes—than the single article of faith respecting man, and what constitutes his essential being, his internal nature, and his higher destiny, which determines the Christian or unchristian view—the religion or irreligion of history, if I may be allowed the expression. This principle of the endless perfectibility of man has something in it very accordant with reason; and if this perfectibility be considered as a mere possible disposition of the human mind, there is doubtless much truth in the theory, but it must be borne in mind that the *corruptibility* of man is quite as great as his perfectibility.

But when this system is applied to the general course of history, it is destitute of any real beginning; for this vague notion of an animal capable of infinite improvement is not a beginning of any series of terms; and in philosophy, as in life and history, there is no true and solid beginning for any thing out of God. And this principle is equally destitute of any right end; for a mere interminable progress is not a fixed

* The author alludes to Condorcet.

term nor positive object. But history presents a mass of stubborn facts, which agree not always with this abstract law of an infinitely progressive perfection, and, on the contrary, the annals not only of particular nations, but of whole periods of the world, would prove that the natural march of humanity lay rather in a circuitous course. This disagreeable fact is utterly inexplicable according to the rationalist system of history—or if it be susceptible of explanation, it certainly is not reconcileable with the liberal view. As often as from the path of endless perfectibility, thus mathematically traced out for them, man and mankind swerve in eccentric deviations; or even should their course, like that of the planets of our heaven at stated periods, be in appearance once retrogressive; the historical enquirer, who starts from this principle, is immediately disconcerted by such a course of events so contrary to his theory; and, in his blind indignation in which he involves alike the present and future, as well as the past, and by the false light of the passionate spirit of time, he pronounces on these a judgment most iniquitous, or at best extremely partial, certainly at least most repugnant to the dictates of truth.

But man is not merely a nobler animal, fashioned by degrees to reason or dignified into genius. His peculiar and distinctive excellence —his real essence—his true nature and destiny consist in his likeness to God; and from this

principle proceeds a view of history totally different from that we have just described; for, according to it, man's history must be the history of the restoration of the likeness to God, or of the progress towards that restoration. That this sublime origin of man being once supposed—the divine image has been much altered, impaired, and defaced in the inmost recesses of the human breast, both of man in particular and of mankind in general, is a truth we may learn, independently of the positive doctrine of religion; for clearly is it vouched and confirmed by the testimony of our own feelings, our own experience of life, and a general survey of the world. No man who well knows that the image of God has been stamped on the human soul, — an image, whose old, half-obliterated characters are still to be found on all the pages of primitive history, and whose impress, not utterly effaced, every reflecting mind may discover in its own interior — can ever forego the hope, that, much as that divine image may seem, or may in fact be, impaired, its restoration is still possible. The man who knows from human life, and from his own experience, how great and arduous is this work—how many obstacles oppose its accomplishment, and how easily, even after a partial success, what already appeared won, may be again lost;—the man understanding this, will not be at a loss to comprehend any pause or retrogression, real or

apparent, in the march of mankind; he will judge the fact with more equity, and consequently more accuracy; and will, in every case, confide in the guidance of that superior Providence, clearly visible in this regeneration of the world. If, in opposition to the Rationalist theory of man's endless perfectibility, we were to designate the opposite system of history founded on man's inborn likeness to his Maker, as the *legitimacy* of historical philosophy; this title would not be incorrect, since all divine and human laws and rights, as they are found in history, depend in their first basis on the supposition of the high dignity and divine destination of man. Hence this view of history is the only one which restores to man the full rights and peculiar prerogatives of his being. Even to all other truths it restores their full force and rights; and it alone can do so without detriment to its own principle; for, as this is the simple truth, it is therefore complete and comprehensive. It must even acknowledge that man, beside his higher dignity and divine destiny, is and remains in his outward existence a physical creature—and though he be such not in an exclusive, but only secondary and subordinate sense, still, in respect to his external being and external development, he may be subject to certain natural laws in history. In the same way it may admit that man endowed with freedom, even when he rejects the religious principle, is

still a being gifted with reason; a being that consequently on this foundation incessantly works, builds and improves, in good as in evil, essentially, interminably,—we might almost say, fearfully progressive. This legitimate philosophy of history, which proceeds from the high, divine point of view, should be, as far as the limited capacity of man will permit, a recognition and a just appreciation of the truth, and thereby become a science of history—that is to say, of all which under Providence has occurred to the human race. Thus it must by no means adopt a view of life and of the world, transcending the true right and the right truth—it must avoid deviating into *ultraism*—though this term of the present day involves in the expression of a true idea, some inaccuracy and misconception. On the contrary, this religious view of history and of life, precisely because it is such, can never in its historical judgments sanction a spirit of harsh, precipitate, unqualified censure. For as the Mosaic doctrine of the divine image stamped on the human soul, forms the real and distinctively Christian theory of man, and consequently of his history; so this evidently implies that, among all the laws of human conduct, emanating from this Christian theory, and from Christianity itself, the law of love is the first and the greatest:—a law which must retain its full force and efficacy not only in life, but in science also. Yet love or charity is by no means

incompatible with firmness of principle — the vacillations of judgment proceed only from indifference to, or the utter absence of, all principle—the tomb of love, as well as of truth.

This divine image implanted in the human breast is not an isolated thought—a transient flash of light, like the kindling spark of Prometheus: nor is it a mere Platonic resemblance to the Deity—an ideal speculation of the human mind, soaring beyond the range of vulgar conception. But, as this likeness to God forms the fundamental principle of human existence, it is interwoven with the internal structure of human consciousness; and the triple nature of the soul is intimately connected with the principle of the divine resemblance. In its state of discord, the human consciousness, in its external operations, pursues four opposite paths of direction towards reason (vernunft), or imagination (fantasie), or understanding (verstand), or will (wille), so long as these faculties remain disunited. But, when consciousness is restored to its primitive harmony, the internal life of man is threefold in mind, soul, and sense; and to expound and demonstrate this truth, was the purport and object of the Philosophy of Life, which I treated of in a former course of lectures. And this triple nature of spiritual life, which, among all creatures, characterizes man alone, is most closely allied with the triple energy and personality of the one Divine Being, and constitutes, as far as the im-

measurable distance between the creature and Creator will permit, the wonderful analogy between weak, mutable man, and the infinite Spirit of eternal Love. But the original harmony of human consciousness—the triple nature of spiritual life, can be restored in individual man by the following means only :—the soul, previously distracted, can regain its unity, or become again whole, only by a divine illumination ;—when this light—the first ray of hope—is humbly received and imbibed by the soul. Enlightened by this first incipient ray, the mind, the living mind, no longer now a cold, dead, abstract understanding, is enabled to embrace with faith the pure word of truth (which is one with love), and to comprehend this word aright, and, by this word, to comprehend the world and its ownself:—while the understanding, in its former isolated and abstract state, was both internally and externally distracted and divided between the phantasmata of nature and the endless sophisms of contentious dialectic. When thus the strong hand of all-guiding love, hath loosed the Gordian knot which bound the human consciousness in inextricable folds ;—the third fundamental faculty in man—the sense for divine things—is then awakened and excited. This is now no longer a mere passive feeling for divine things—a will undetermined, or incapable of good : but it becomes an energy acting on life—an energy which is itself life and deed.

But the progressive march of social man' which constitutes the subject of universal history, or, as we term it, the formation and growth of humanity, are regulated by principles somewhat different from those which determine the internal life of individual man. Here the different stages of development cannot be classed according to the three fundamental faculties of consciousness in individual man; but the principle of development must be sought for in the divine impulse, as the same is attested by history, and which, in every stage of social progress, has been to mankind the source of a new life; though here again from the very nature of things, three marked degrees of social advancement occur. Corresponding to the divine image implanted in the breast of individual man—the main subject of all history—the Word of divine truth originally communicated to man, and which the sacred traditions of all nations attest in so many and such various ways, forms the leading clue of historical investigation and judgment, during the first stage of the progress of society. But in the second stage of social development, which must be fixed in that full noon-day period of refinement, when victorious Power shines forth so conspicuously in the ascendancy obtained by nations, to whom universal pre-eminence was accorded—the right notion of this power, or the question how far it were just and godly, or pernicious in its application—whether it were ini-

mical to God, or at least of a mixed nature—must constitute the true standard of historical investigation. In the third or last stage, however, of this progress, which occurs in the modern period of the world, the pure truths of Christianity, as they influence science and life itself, can alone furnish the right clue of historical enquiry, and can alone afford any indication as to the ulterior advances of society in future ages. Thus then the *Word*, the *Power*, and the *Light*, form the three-fold divine principle, or the moral classification of historical philosophy—a classification which is founded on historical experience and historical reality.

The existence of a primitive revelation—the establishment of Christianity, which was the principle and power of a new moral life in society—and the pre-eminence of modern Europe in civilization, in which she outshines all other portions of the globe, and even in many respects most periods of antiquity, are three historical data—three mighty facts in civilization, which evince the successive stages of human progress and improvement. And it is our task to appreciate in their full extent each of those different degrees of social advancement, and to comprehend and explain them aright in their relative bearings to the whole. That the Christian nations and states of Europe have received, along with the light of Divine truth, a high intellectual, moral and political illumination, no one

will deny; and it is equally evident that this vital principle of modern society is still involved in the crisis of its development—a crisis which will form the principal subject of historical enquiry in the latter part of this work.

It is equally undeniable that, in the second period of the world, to which I now pass, each of those nations that attained to universal empire at that epoch, displayed a high intellectual or moral energy. This energy was visible in that strong, deep sense of nature, which characterized the old ancestral faith and pure manners of the ancient Persians, and in that high martial enthusiasm, and fervent patriotism, which it so easily inspired. The power of inventive genius in the sciences, and in the fine arts, none can deny to the Greeks; none can dispute their pre-eminence in these; as, on the other hand, the Romans were equally unrivalled in vigour of character, and in that moral energy of will, which they exhibited in all their contests with other states. Here now the question to be asked is, whether that high intellectual and moral energy accorded to those nations, thus gifted with universal dominion, were always well employed: whether that power, exalted as it was, were truly divine, or what were the earthly and pernicious elements intermixed with it;—whether this power, great and wonderful as it was in its way, were in itself adequate to the moral and intellectual regeneration of degraded

humanity; or whether a power of another, far purer and higher nature were requisite to this end. I should think I had amply solved the problem involved in the history of that first period of the world, which I have here brought to a close, if, in this brief historical sketch, I have succeeded in proving the existence of an original revelation to mankind — the primitive word of divine truth — whereof we find the clearest indications and scattered traces in the sacred traditions of all the primitive nations— traces which, when viewed apart, appear like the broken remnants, the mysterious, and, as it were, hieroglyphic characters — of a mighty edifice that has been destroyed. I should think, too, I had fully accomplished my task, if I have succeeded in proving that, however much amid the growing degeneracy of mankind, this primal word of revelation may have been falsified by the admixture of various errors, however much it may have been overlaid or obscured by numberless and manifold fictions, inextricably confused, and disfigured almost beyond the power of recognition; still a profound enquiry will discover in heathenism many luminous vestiges of primitive truth.

For the old Heathenism (and we must add this remark as the result of our enquiries), the old Heathenism had a foundation in truth, and, thoroughly examined and rightly understood, would serve for a confirmation of the same;

for the profound researches of recent times on ancient mythology, and its historical sources, though conducted with the most opposite views, lead us more and more to this great end and result of all the knowledge of antiquity, or at least very near it. Were it possible, or could we succeed in separating the pure intuition into nature and the simple symbols of nature, that constituted the basis of all Heathenism, from the alloy of error, and the incumbrances of fiction; those first hieroglyphic traits of the instinctive science of the first men would not be repugnant to truth and to a true knowledge of nature, but would offer on the contrary, an instructive image of a freer, purer, more comprehensive, and more finished philosophy of life. For, if man, who is the highest and most central object of nature on the earth, had not possessed in the beginning an instinctive science and immediate insight into nature, he could never have attained to this knowledge by the resources of art, and by all the aids of instruments and machinery, or have acquired thereby a true understanding of nature, her internal life, and her hidden powers. The symbolical error which has produced mythology, and which has again emanated from mythology —I mean the identification of the symbol with the object itself, of which, as the latter was something higher and more mysterious, the former originally was, and should have been, nothing more than the mere explanatory emblem—the

symbolical error is comparatively the most excusable; and, for a being constituted like man, whose soul is divided between figurative fancy and discursive reason, is almost natural, and has grown into a psychological habit, and a second nature. This error would never have arisen, if the confusion of the high and of the low, of the principal and of the inferior, of God and of Nature, and the inversion of the due order of each, had not, in a partial degree at least, previously taken place. The fundamental error of Paganism lay in the sensual idolatry of nature, by which that inversion of things, and with them of all moral doctrines, took place; although this destructive error of materialism is to be found not only in the heathen religion, but in the atomical philosophy and other false systems of science. Besides that sensual deification of nature, which was the predominant principle in the mythology and popular religion of the ancients, there was another and capital error—magic, which was a dark and abusive application—an illicit perversion of the high powers of nature, when these were really understood, and the mind, penetrating through her sensible and external veil, had caught her true spirit and internal life. This loftier, and, on that account, more dangerous error was not so prevalent in the popular and poetical religion of antiquity, but was chiefly to be found in the secret associations of the Pagan Mysteries.—

Although these Mysteries which, in Greece, as well as in Egypt, exerted such a mighty influence on public opinion, on science, and on the whole system of thinking, nay on life itself, disclosed far graver and profounder doctrines than the vulgar mythology of the poets, on all the great questions relative to the human soul, its capacity and original dignity, as well as to the hidden powers of Nature and the whole invisible world; still we must not imagine that the influence of these Mysteries was always salutary, or that their internal constitution and ruling spirit were in their ultimate tendency always entitled to commendation. We may, in my opinion, ascribe to the Egyptians much science, especially in physics, more perhaps than the Greeks in general, and the Pythagoreans in particular, had, as far as we yet know, learned and borrowed from them; but we must not imagine this Egyptian science to have been exempt from a gross alloy of error, and the various abuses of magic. When once the sacred standard and clue of truth are lost, when the due order of things and of doctrines is once inverted, then the mind of man often associates the sublime, the mysterious, and the wonderful, with the mean, the perverse, and the wicked. Amid all those false and whimsical images of Gods, the mere symbols of Nature, but at least very equivocal emblems and hieroglyphs, the temple-sleep of the Egyptians might easily

nourish illusions of error and visions of darkness; especially where a magical spirit prevailed, that is to say, an illicit purpose in the application of the high powers of nature—and a will instigated to evil by the arts of the demon. And in all science the matter of greatest moment, and that which determines its value, is its relation to the higher and divine truth; that is to say, whether this science be well employed, or whether, on the contrary, it be converted to a corrupt and destructive use; whether the due order and subordination of inferior Nature, and of every thing earthly, towards God and the things of God, which are the principal, be rightly observed and maintained. But this fundamental truth being once supposed, all science, even that which penetrates the deepest into Nature and her most hidden springs of life, can conduce only to the greater glory of the mighty author of Nature. All these natural secrets, and their true explanations, are to be found in various passages, notices, and allusions in the Old Testament, especially in the books of Moses; they are, indeed, to be found there, like so many golden grains of science in full weight, but, scattered and dispersed, they serve at once to adorn and point out the path that leads to an object, ever regarded as the most important in Holy Writ — namely, the revealing to man the wonderful ways of divine Providence in the conduct of the human race—the holy ark of the

covenant of divine mysteries and promises, if I may be allowed such an expression. Here every thing is subordinate to religion, every thing ministers to this higher object — and this is the distinctive mark and stamp of truth, even in the investigations of Nature, and of its revealed or hidden mysteries.

How a slight deviation from truth may suffice to give birth in time to a mighty and progressive error, is strongly exemplified in the fundamental doctrine of the ancient religion of Persia—a doctrine which was at first nothing more than a simple veneration of Nature, its pure elements and its primary energies—the sacred fire, and above all, light—the air, not the lower atmospheric air, but the purer and higher air of heaven—the breath that animates and pervades the breath of mortal life. In India, too, this doctrine must have been very prevalent in the primitive ages; for many and very ancient passages of the Vedas refer to these elements, while on the other hand, the names of the later Hindoo divinities appear to have been entirely unknown at that period. This pure and simple veneration of nature is perhaps the most ancient, and was by far the most generally prevalent in the primitive and Patriarchal world. In its original conception, it was by no means a deification of Nature, or a denial of the sovereignty of God—it was only at a later period that the symbol, as it so often happens, was confounded with the

thing itself, and usurped the place of that higher Object which it was destined originally to represent. And how can we doubt that these pure elements and primitive essences of created Nature would offer to the first men, who were still in a close communication with the Deity, not indeed a likeness or resemblance (for in man alone is that to be found), nor a mere fanciful image, or a poetical figure, but a natural and true symbol of divine power;—how can we doubt this, I say, when we see that, in so many passages of Holy Writ (not to say in every part), the pure light or sacred fire is employed as an image of the all-pervading and all-consuming power and omnipotence of God? Not to speak again of those passages of scripture, which describe the animating breath and inspiration of God as the first source of life, and speak of the gentle breath, the light whisper of the breeze that announced to the prophet the immediate presence of his God, before whom he fell prostrate, and mantled himself in awe and reverence; and this surely cannot be understood as a poetical and figurative expression! Undoubtedly the scriptures often oppose to that natural emblem or veil of divine power, in the pure elements, an evil, subterraneous and destructive fire—the false light of the fiends of error—the poisonous breath of moral contagion. And how could it be otherwise? Nature in its origin was nought else than a beautiful image—

a pure emanation — a wonderful creation — a sport of omnipotent love; so, when it was severed from its divine original, internally displaced, and turned against its Maker, it became vitiated in its substance, and fraught with evil. This alienation of Nature from God, this inversion of the right order in the relations between God and Nature, was the peculiar, essential and fundamental error of ancient Paganism, its false Mysteries, and the abusive application of the higher powers of Nature in magical rites. On the other hand, we ought to regard every similar inversion of things and of ideas, every similar derangement in the divine system, though established on the basis of Christianity, and by Christian philosophers—we ought, I say, to regard every such attempt as being in its essential nature and principle a heathen enterprise—the foundation of a scientific Paganism, although no altars be erected to Apollo, and no Mysteries be celebrated in honour of Isis.*

The pure symbolism of Nature, and the whole circle of the primitive symbolical ideas of the Egyptians, several of the Greek writers attempted to gather out of the mass of idolatrous tenets, natural emblems, and hieroglyphic signs of speech; but their researches do not correspond to the importance of the subject itself, nor

* This is an allusion to the Pantheistic Naturalism of Schelling.—*Trans.*

to the present demands of science. It is well worthy of remark that the hieroglyphics, as far as they have yet been deciphered, do not indicate in their formation that variety of epochs observable in the Chinese system of writing; but on the contrary they seem to be all of a single cast, and offer the same circle of ideas and the same style of emblems. And as images of Gods are to be found in a diminutive form among the other hieroglyphic signs, we may conclude from this circumstance, that all the hieroglyphics must have had a simultaneous origin, and have remained subsequently unchanged; and that their origin must have occurred at a time when the Egyptian idolatry had already been wrought into a perfect system.

In the primitive ages, during the first thirty-three centuries of the world, according to the ordinary computation, the various nations into which mankind were divided, followed in their development a separate and secluded course; and two mighty nations, the Indians and the Chinese, have remained to this day in this isolated and totally sequestered state. The peculiar character which distinguishes the second from the first epoch of the world is that, along with the first mighty conquests, there existed a much closer connection, a mutual influence, an active commerce, and various intercourse among many nations, nay, among all the nations of the then civilized world. From this period, when the inter-

course among nations becomes more intimate, History acquires greater clearness, precision, and critical exactness; and this is only six, or at most seven centuries before the Christian era. The first Persian conquerors advanced with rapid strides towards the objects of their ambition; for after the founder of the Persian empire—Cyrus, had made himself master of the whole central region of Western Asia, as well as of the Lesser Asia, his successes were soon followed up by the conquest of Egypt by the arms of Cambyses; and a little subsequent to this, by the great expedition of Xerxes into Greece, whose valiant defenders, however, ruined his hopes of conquest. Egypt, which in its intellectual character, civilization, and political institutions, had a much stronger analogy and affinity with those two great primitive states —India and China, shut out from the rest of the world, was engaged in political relations with the nations of Western Asia, and those inhabiting the shores of the Mediterranean, such as the Persians, the Phœnicians, and the Greeks; and hence a short sketch of its political history, down to the period of the Persian conquest, as far at least as is necessary for the elucidation of general history, will not be here inappropriate or misplaced.

The long list of names of kings, belonging to more than twenty dynasties of the ancient Pharaohs, furnishes indeed matter of little interest or importance to the philosophic enquirer in his

researches on universal history. It is, however, worthy of remark that many and vast expeditions appear to have been undertaken in the early ages of Egypt; though, while mention is made of such conquests, nothing is said of the permanent possession of the conquered countries. Sesostris, who, in the lifetime of his father, Amenophis, had seized the whole coast of Arabia, next vanquished, for the first time, Lybia and Ethiopia, afterwards extended his conquests to Bactriana, subdued the Scythian nations in the Caucasian countries, in Colchis, and as far as the Don, and even took possession of Thrace. The descent of the Colchians from the Egyptians, or the existence of an Egyptian colony in Colchis, was regarded by the ancients as an historical fact. The yet more ancient King Osymandas is said to have undertaken an expedition, attended by an immense army, to reconquer Bactriana that had revolted against the Egyptian sway; and the triumphant arms of Osiris stretched on one hand as far as the Ganges, and on the other as far as the sources of the Danube. Here a question arises: — did the Egyptians possess heroic poems similar to the Ramayana and Mahabarata of the Indians, and were these marvellous narratives extracted from these poems? Or had all these narratives a signification purely mythic, as we may easily conjecture to be the case in the expedition of Osiris? In those historical ages which are better

known to us, Egypt was certainly never a conquering power — at least its conquests were never of a solid and permanent nature; though even in those times Egypt made some transient conquests, or at least expeditions; and, guilty of great political encroachments on other states and nations, was often doomed to experience from these a vigorous resistance to her attempts. A part of Libya, the coast of Arabia contiguous to the Red Sea, and the Arabia Petræa, acknowledged for a long time the sceptre of the Pharaohs, (and this fact indeed, the various monuments covered over with hieroglyphics, which are found in those countries, would seem to corroborate): Ethiopia, too, or at least a considerable portion of that region, was for a long period in the possession of the Egyptian kings. The construction of the many ancient and vast edifices and monuments which are crowded together in the province of Thebais must, to all appearance, have required a greater number of hands than the Proper Egypt (a country by no means of considerable extent) could have furnished of itself. As Ethiopia had been conquered by the Egyptians, so the Ethiopians in their turn invaded Egypt, and founded there a royal dynasty. The second of these Ethiopian kings, Tirhaka, sought to stretch his conquests as far Libya and the Northern coast of Africa, and must have penetrated as far as the columns of Hercules, or the modern straits of Gibraltar.

On the other hand, there is historical evidence that even the Carthaginians, at the time when the family of Mago had the ascendancy in their state, conquered and took possession of the Egyptian city of Thebes. The king of Egypt, who is known in the historical books of the Hebrews by the name of Shishak, and who made the transient conquest of Jerusalem, is called Sheshonk or Sesonchis in the ancient inscriptions of the Pharaohs.

It is worthy of remark that we find, in the old Egyptian monuments, pictures of war-scenes representing very strangely-formed, or at least very remote, nations, as captives of war, and among these, we distinguish some with red hair and blue eyes, tattooed on the legs, perfectly corresponding to the descriptions which many ancients have left us of the Scythian nations. At a much earlier period, a Nomade tribe of Phœnician, or, most probably, Arabian descent, had taken possession of the throne of Egypt, and had established in that country the national dynasty of the Hycsos, that is to say, the Shepherd-kings. Some have wished to connect these with the Israelites; but in the whole history of the latter—the hospitable reception of the Hebrew colony under Joseph—its subsequent oppression—and its final expulsion from Egypt in the time of Moses, we can find no trace of any such dominion of a pastoral nation of Hebrews, or of any dynasty founded by them in Egypt;

and even other circumstances agree not at all with such a supposition. With the neighbouring nations and tribes, Egypt had manifold and various relations, which, though in some particulars they might be similar, were far from being identical. If it is proved that Sesostris ascended the throne immediately after his father had succeeded in expelling the Hycsos, it may fairly be presumed that as an internal revolt against a foreign power and a foreign dynasty is wont to enkindle a spirit of martial enthusiasm, which easily leads to ulterior and more vigorous undertakings; the expeditions and conquests of Sesostris, though ever so much exaggerated, are not entirely destitute of historical foundation. Thus much is certain, that in antiquity there existed in many places, comparatively remote from Egypt, whole colonies, especially of a sacerdotal kind, whose origin was undoubtedly Egyptian; and that the first colonies which carried arts and civilization into Greece, and the other countries bordering on the Mediterranean, did not come solely from Phœnicia; for even in Greece, the genealogy of many royal families and ancient cities, as well as most, if not all, the Mysteries, particularly the Orphic, pointed to Egypt as their common parent. And it is very possible that in those early ages, in which these Egyptian expeditions are said to have been undertaken, armed colonies may have emigrated from Egypt, not always influenced how-

ever by those commercial views which invariably directed the colonists of Phœnicia; but animated by those higher motives of religion, which, for example, had such an evident influence on the first Persian conquests—by a desire to diffuse the Mysteries, and thereby, while they bound to Egypt the then still barbarous nations of the West, to raise the latter to the more exalted scale of Egyptian civilization. Even domestic troubles and civil discord may have been instrumental in producing those distant emigrations, which at this distance of time appear to us so mysterious and unaccountable. Such civil discord indeed existed in Egypt under various forms. The country itself was often divided into several kingdoms; and even when united, we observe a great conflict of interests between the agricultural province of Upper Egypt, and the commercial and manufacturing province of the Lower; as indeed a similar clashing of interests is often to be noticed in modern states. In the period immediately preceding the Persian conquest, the caste of warriors, that is to say, the whole class of nobility were decidedly opposed to the monarchs, because they imagined them to promote too much the power of the priesthood; in the same way as the history of India presents a similar rivalry or political hostility between the Brahmins and the caste of the Cshatriyas. In the reign of the Egyptian king Psammetichus, who

had first checked or repelled the Scythian nations whose victorious arms then menaced the whole of Asia, this disaffection of the native nobility obliged this prince to take Greek soldiers into his pay; and thus at length was the defence of Egypt intrusted to an army of foreign mercenaries. This circumstance, as well as the great commercial intercourse with the Greeks, and the number of Greek settlements in Lower Egypt, had made this province half Greek even prior to the Persian conquest; and had paved the way, and opened the door, to this, as well as to the later, conquest by the Greeks: for, in general, states and kingdoms, before they succumb to a foreign conqueror, are, if not outwardly and visibly, yet secretly and internally undermined.

The classical writers of antiquity begin in general their universal history by an account of the Assyro-Babylonian empire, which preceded the Medo-Persian, and the annals of the early mythic ages of this empire are embellished with the fabulous victories of Semiramis; as similar fictions indeed are to be found in the primitive Sagas of all the other Asiatic nations. However, the conquest of Media by Ninus, appears to be more historical. The simplest, and for that reason, the most correct view of the subject is this, that in this great central region of Western Asia, four countries were contiguous, which often formed separate empires—Babylon

and Assyria, Media and Persia; and which, when united, were governed sometimes by one, sometimes by another province, according to the country to which the ruling dynasty belonged; while the different capitals of these four countries, Babylon, Ninive, Ecbatana, Susa, or Persepolis alternately formed during their flourishing period the centre of a great empire. This first Assyro-Babylonian universal monarchy, as it is called, should not be considered as a distinct period of history, but rather as the most ancient dynasty of a great Asiatic empire, which was succeeded by a second, the Medo-Persian dynasty; in the same way as the successors of Alexander the Great founded in this very country a new Greek kingdom, and as at a later period the Parthians, whose original seat lay to the North-east, re-established in this land a native sovereignty, that proved very formidable to the Romans. This great middle country of Western Asia is the native seat of conquest; it was hence that emanated the spirit of ambition and enterprise, which found indeed in the very situation of the country most extraordinary facilities. And it is here, too, that Holy Writ places the abode of the first universal conqueror —the cradle of all ambition and conquest. In the very place where the ancient Babylon stood there are now immense ruins, to which the inhabitants of the country give the name of Nimrod's castle, and which involuntarily bring to the

modern traveller's mind the old histroy of the Tower of Babel; as these ruins in all probability formed a part of the great temple of Belus, which in eight lofty stories rose to a prodigious height, and on the pinnacle whereof stood a colossal idol of the National Divinity—the sun. Even now the ruins of this temple, piled in immense heaps one upon the other, and which seem as if glazed by some raging fire, produce a very profound impression on the mind; and to such a height do they rise that the clouds rest on their summit above, while lions couch on the walls; or haunt the caverns below. Here, too, we look for the place where were the vast terraces, with their hanging or floating gardens, as the ancients called them, and which in a country by no means abounding in wood, the Assyrian monarch constructed from affection to his Median spouse. Here the widely scattered heaps and mounds of brick, inscribed with the cuneal characters of Babylon, attest the existence and vast circumference of the mighty capital, of whose dimensions no European city, but the Asiatic cities only, can furnish an adequate idea. This Babylonish tower has been in every age a figure of the heaven-aspiring edifice of lordly arrogance, which sooner or later is sure to be struck down and scattered afar by the arm of the divine Nemesis; and in Holy Writ itself, the Babylon giddied by the intoxicating cup of ambition, drunk with the blood of

nations, is a mighty historical emblem, applicable to every age from the earliest to the latest times, of the mad, people-destroying career of a Pagan pride. Here did the evil commence, although the first Assyrian empire had no very extensive influence on the nations westward, and although the real epoch of universal conquest dates from the Persian Cyrus. Yet the ancient Babylon contrived to maintain her power, for, as has so often been exemplified in history, she, by the moral contagion of her voluptuous manners, conquered her conquerors, who abandoned the gods of their ancestors, to embrace the sensual nature-worship of the Babylonians. In the new monarchy founded by Cyrus, the Persians (now the ruling nation) were closely united and politically, at least, incorporated with the once more powerful Medes. Yet their race and language were originally very different, and even at a later period we can still observe some traces of mutual jealousy in a change of dynasty, or the forcible dethronement of the prince. The institute of the Magi, which Cyrus established in his new Persian empire, served outwardly at least, to cement this union; for the Magi were of the Median race, and their sacred zend-books were not composed in the Persian language, but in two distinct dialects of Media, if one indeed were not rather Bactrian. The Magi were not so much an hereditary sacerdotal caste, as an order or associa-

tion divided into various and successive ranks and grades, such as existed in the Mysteries — the grade of apprenticeship — that of mastership —that of perfect mastership. Foreigners could not easily gain admission into this sacerdotal order; and it was only at the express solicitation of the King of Persia, at whose court he resided, that this extraordinary favour was accorded to Themistocles. Whether the old Persian doctrine and *system of light** did not undergo material alterations in the hands of its Median restorer, Zoroaster; or whether this doctrine were preserved in all its purity by the order of the Magi, may well be questioned. It is certain at least that that primitive veneration of nature is found completely disfigured and corrupted in the small existing remnant of the sect of Guebers or fire-worshippers.

On the order of the Magi devolved the important trust of the monarch's education—a trust which must necessarily have given them great weight and influence in the state. They were in high credit at the *Persian gates*,—for that was the oriental name given to the capital of the empire, and the abode of the prince; and they took the most active part in all the factions that encompassed the throne, or that were formed in the vicinity of the court. In Greece, and even

* In the German "*Lichtsage*," or Tradition of Light.—*Trans.*

in Egypt, the sacerdotal fraternities and associations of initiated, formed by the Mysteries, had in general but an indirect, though not unimportant, influence on affairs of state; but in the Persian monarchy they acquired a complete political ascendency. The next main pillar of the Persian monarchy was its nobility, or the principal race of the Pasargads, who immediately surrounded the throne, enjoyed the highest prerogatives, and formed indeed the flower of the Persian army. The strict moral and military education which this nobility received, and of which Xenophon has drawn such a beautiful ideal sketch, constituted the chief strength of the state. And certainly the neglect of this old Persian system of education was one of the primary causes of the decline of the empire—a decline which the progressive relaxation and corruption of public morals accelerated with a fearful rapidity. After the first mighty impulse, and that severe moral character which Cyrus had imparted to Persia, had disappeared, the same fate befel this empire, as has befallen all the great oriental monarchies. The same evils, which the domination of provincial Satraps—a government of the Seraglio—invariably bring along with it—the factions, the conspiracies, the changes of dynasty, and the other disorders incident to despotism, appear in exactly similar colours in the Persian annals; and even in the modern kingdom of Persia, we

find many of those characteristic traits or usages of Asiatic government, as they existed in the ancient empire. Even the army for the most part consisted of troops levied out of the conquered nations, and the greater were its numbers, the less internal union did it possess. Hence we can well conceive that a small army of Greeks, animated by patriotic valour, and commanded by generals possessed of a true tactical eye and genius, were able to oppose to the immense hosts of Persia a resistance which in a numerical point of view, appears almost incredible, and were even enabled to gain unexpected victories over their enemies. We can conceive too, how in the time of Alexander the Great, three battles should have decided the fate of this great empire; for its moral life and energy were gone, and the pillars of the state were completely decayed.

The Persian empire lasted but for the short period of two hundred and twenty years, from its foundation by Cyrus to the reign of the last Darius, whose personal character and fate leave such an affecting and tragical impression on our minds. The universal conquests of the Persians, rapid, but transient, acted on the age with all the violence of the elemental powers of nature. Sudden and rapid, like a wind-storm, they invaded and subdued all other states and kingdoms;—the expedition of Xerxes into Greece was a real inundation of nations—and as the

destructive fire, after blazing on high and desolating and consuming all things around, sinks quickly again—it was so with the Persian empire. The dominion of the Persians exerted no very permanent influence on those other nations whose civilization was anterior to their own. Egypt, in despite of the violent persecution which she sustained under Cambyses, remained still the ancient Egypt—and with yet greater fidelity did she cling to her ancient customs, under the milder sway of the Ptolemies, whose government was so much more congenial to her spirit and character. Phœnicia, Palestine, and Asia Minor, also remained essentially unchanged. In an historical point of view, the main result of the Persian conquests was this—they brought the nations of Western Asia and of Egypt into a close contact, and a very active and permanent intercourse with the states of Greece, and those situated on the shores of the Mediterranean. The Persian dominion, and the contest of that power with Greece, had indeed a very great, though only indirect, influence on the latter country, inasmuch as it favoured the growth and development of Grecian liberty, and at a later period produced the great re-action under Alexander the Great. This Greek re-action was in its spirit and character somewhat similar to the previous irruption and ambitious invasion of the Persians; in Alexander at least, we can clearly discover an oriental

spirit that, not content with the narrow boundaries of his hereditary kingdom of Macedon, sought to transcend the sphere of Hellenic civilization, Hellenic doctrines, and Hellenic modes of thinking. And I call that an Asiatic enthusiasm which, with resistless impetuosity, bore away the Macedonian to the capital of Persia, and even beyond the banks of the Indus.

END OF LECTURE VII.

LECTURE VIII.

Variety of Grecian life and intellect.—State of education and of the fine arts among the Greeks.—The origin of their philosophy and natural science.—Their political degeneracy.

It would be difficult to point out a more striking difference, a more decided opposition in the whole circle of the intellectual and moral character and habits of nations, as far at least as the sphere of known history extends, than that which exists between the seclusive and monotonous character of Asiatic intellect—the generally unchangeable uniformity of oriental manners and oriental society, and the manifold activity—the varied life of the Greeks, in the first flourishing ages of their history. This amazing diversity in the moral and intellectual habits of the Greeks appears not only in their legislation, their forms of government, their manners, occupations, and usages of life, but in

their various and widely dispersed settlements and colonies, in their descent, which was composed of so many heterogeneous elements, in the first seeds of their civilization—as well as their distribution into hostile tribes and great and petty states, and even in their traditions, their history, and the arts and forms of art to which those gave rise—finally in a science, engaged in incessant strife, and marching from system to system, amid the noise and tumult of opposition. In Asia, even in those countries such as India, where the poetry, the views of life, and the systems of philosophy were extremely various, and bore in this respect an external resemblance to those of Greece; where even the country in ancient times was never permanently united into one compact empire; yet the whole way of thinking, the prevalent feeling was entirely monarchical, proceeding from, and returning again to, unchangeable unity. On the other hand, in Greece, science, like life itself, was thoroughly republican—and, if we meet with particular thinkers, who leaned to this Asiatic doctrine of unity, we must regard this as only an exception—a system adopted from a love of change, or out of a spirit of opposition to the vulgar and generally received opinion that all in nature and the world, as well as in man, was in a state of perpetual movement, constant change, and freedom of life. Even the fabulous world of Grecian divinities, as it has

been painted by their poets, has a republican cast; for there every thing is in a state of change, of successive renovation, and of mutual collision in the war of Nature's elements, in the hostility of old and new deities of the superior and inferior Gods,—of giants and of heroes—presenting, as it does, a state of poetical anarchy. Hence, even the historical traditions of the Greeks, and the first accounts of their early seats, settlements, and the migrations of their different races, present to the eye of the historical enquirer a dense forest of truth and fiction, of fanciful conjecture, absolute fable, and ancient and venerable knowledge—a labyrinth of poetry and of history, in whose various and intricate mazes it is often difficult for the critic to find the true outlet, and to hold fast by the guiding clue of Ariadne, when he wishes to adopt a lucid arrangement, and assign to each part its due place in the system of the whole. The Greek tribes and nations inhabited not only the proper Greece, the Peninsula Peloponnesian, the contiguous islands, the Southern plains of the Continent (on whose Northern frontiers it is often difficult to draw the line of demarcation between the tribes of Greek and foreign extraction); and also the Western coasts of Asia Minor; but they had founded a number of small states and planted many flourishing colonies in the remotest corners of the Euxine, in the Lower Egypt, where, long prior to the Persian wars,

many Greek settlements existed — along the Northern shore of Africa, where the flourishing Cyrene was situated, on the Southern coasts of Spain and Gaul, in Sicily, and throughout the whole of Southern Italy. Their navigation extended even to the Baltic, as the voyage of Pytheas evinces; and, though they did not circumnavigate Africa, — a thing which it is still doubtful whether the Phænicians accomplished, — they rather surpassed than yielded to the latter nation in the activity of their trade, and the wealth and extent of their Colonies. The stupendous monuments and edifices of the Egyptians are indeed of more colossal dimensions; yet the works of Grecian sculpture and architecture, while some of them are on a very large scale, are incomparably more various, more rich in ornament, more animated, and beautiful, than those of Egypt. The Greeks were not a mere sea-faring and commercial people, like the Phœnicians; nor did they compete with the Egyptians in those proud monuments of architecture whose erection required such thousands of human hands; but they were from their earliest period a martial people, well trained to war. Independently of every feeling of patriotic enthusiasm and national defence, they looked on war as a trade and a living, and they loved it accordingly. This is proved by the fact that, in the age preceding the Persian conquest, and long

before the Persians waged war with Greece, the Kings of Egypt had not only Greek squadrons in their service, but that the whole Egyptian army was for the most part composed of Grecian mercenaries. Such, too, was the case in Carthage, and, at a later period, in Persia, where whole legions and armies of Greeks were engaged in the service of the great king. This old custom among the Greeks of enlisting in the military service of foreign states, may have been indeed an excellent preparation for their great national wars, though in these the first great exploits were achieved by small companies of troops from Athens, Sparta, and other free states, as well as by a select body of free citizens. But this custom could have had no very favourable influence on national opinions and feelings, and the mutual relations of the Greek tribes and states.

The Republican form of government mostly prevailed in the various Greek settlements and Colonies, established round the shores of the Mediterranean; for it is to this species of government that maritime nations, commercial cities, and petty states almost always incline, as long as their territories remain circumscribed. Yet in these states, we find a great variety of political constitutions; for along with that multitude of small commercial Republics, there were many, like Sparta and others, that depended exclusively, or for the most part, on agriculture

and the riches of the soil. In these, the hereditary nobility, the proprietors of the soil, formed the principal class; for in general the Greeks attached a very high importance to the noble races and princely families that deduced their descent from the old heroic times. The original constitution of many, of almost the greater part of these small Greek Republics, was a tolerably mild aristocracy, headed by an hereditary Prince, or chieftain. In some states, as for instance in Athens, the transition from this old aristocratical government, headed by an hereditary prince, to a thoroughly democratic constitution, was but slow and gradual; as the memory of their ancient kings, for example, of Codrus, who fell in the defence of his country, was ever cherished by the Athenian people with love and reverence. The popular hatred in Athens was directed only against those leaders of the state who, like Pisistratus, after having obtained their power by means of popular influence, sought to stretch and perpetuate it by force of arms and the use of foreign mercenaries. Yet even Pisistratus possessed great qualities, and his sway was in general mild, and conformable to the laws of Solon;—it cannot be denied, however, that his was an usurped authority, and one founded on illegitimate force. At a later period, and when the Athenian state became more and more democratic—as there is not a more thankless being in all nature than

the sovereign people, in its lawless and capricious rule, the people of Athens, jealous of their freedom, and too easily deluded by the arts of oratorical sophistry, pointed their hatred at all the great men and deserving citizens of the state. The general Miltiades perished in prison; Aristides the just, Cimon and many others fell the victims of ostracism, and died in exile, as did the great historians, Herodotus and Thucydides. Themistocles himself, who had been the liberator of Athens and of Greece, was obliged to take refuge at the court of the Persian monarch, from whom he received protection and hospitality. The wisest of the Athenians, the master of Plato, who had ever proved himself an honest citizen and a valiant defender of his country, received the cup of poison for his recompence.

But we no where discover in the early ages of Athens, and of the other Greek Republics, that hatred to kings and to royalty in general, which even the primitive history of Rome displays. Nay, in Sparta, amid a Republican constitution, the kingly power and dignity were preserved inviolate down to the latest period; while in Macedon a new monarchy grew up, which at first asserted a sort of Protectorate over the other states, and at last established a very despotic ascendancy over all Greece. Even in those states where the constitution was more democratical, that is to say, where it was

founded, not on an hereditary nobility and the possession of the soil, but chiefly on moveable property, on trade, and manufactures, we must not look for that sort of arithmetical freedom and equality which exists in some modern Republics, for instance, in the United States of America. The number of citizens really free, eligible, and possessed of the right of suffrage, was exceedingly small when compared with the bulk of the population—by far the greater part were not so, and a multitude of bought slaves, especially in the commercial states, was employed in manufactures, and in the tillage of the land. This universally prevalent custom—the harsh treatment and oppression of slaves—forms a very painful contrast in the ancient Republics, little corresponding to our own ideal of social happiness, and in itself very degrading to humanity. In the interior and more aristocratic states, slavery assumed another shape—the remnant of the original inhabitants of the soil, that had survived the conquest of their country, such as the Helots of Sparta, and the Penestæ of Thessaly, were not merely reduced by the conquerors in their newly-founded governments to the condition of vassals, as we should term them, or even of serfs; but were degraded to a state of absolute slavery, and generally treated with great severity. If we except this one circumstance, the aristocracy, that ruled in most of the ancient Republics of Greece, was on the

whole, tolerably well constituted; a number of accessory circumstances had tended to soften its sway, and even, in some instances, it was ennobled by high worth. Ancestral manners and customs—the very smallness of the states—all tended to mitigate its rule—a wise legislation, like that of Solon, and of other law-givers animated by the same spirit, had at once consolidated and tempered its power; while it was adorned by republican virtues and many personal qualities in those elder and better times, ere the ancient simplicity of manners was yet totally corrupted.

In most of the Greek Republics, besides, commerce daily acquired greater influence and importance, and it was impossible in such a state of things that any rigidly exclusive aristocracy could have been formed, or could have long maintained its ascendancy. Even the priesthood in Greece (for there there was no danger of the political predominance of an hereditary sacerdotal caste, as in Egypt), even the priesthood, by maintaining ancient manners, customs and laws, on which indeed their own existence depended, exerted a mild and beneficial influence in the state; for they at least formed a counterpoise to a mere selfish aristocracy, and sometimes opposed the last barrier to democratic tyranny.

The Mysteries too, in particular, which, although they did not at a later period, as in

their origin, diffuse a sounder morality than the popular mythology, yet certainly inculcated more serious doctrines, and more spiritual views of life, exerted, together with the Olympic and Isthmian games, a gentle, and on the whole, a very beneficial, influence, and served as a bond of connection between the variously divided and discordant nations of Greece. Nay these public and gymnastic games, which were celebrated in the festive poetry of the Greeks, served to knit more firmly the bond of national union, so exceedingly loose among this people; and many times, in a moment of danger, has the oracle of Delphi roused and united all the sons of Hellas. These political decisions of the oracle were not false, so far at least as in these critical moments they gave no other counsel to the Greeks, but that of patriotic courage, prudent firmness, and national concord.

Widely dissimilar as were the Greek tribes and nations in their original seats and settlements, their occupations and modes of living, their manners and political institutions, they differed not less in the primitive elements of their civilization. The Phœnician Cadmus, according to tradition, brought the alphabet, and with it, undoubtedly, many other elements of knowledge to the city of Thebes—the Egyptian Cecrops laid the ground-work of the old Athenian manners and government—the Thracian Orpheus, though his doctrines had much ana-

logy to those of Egypt, founded the widely diffused Mysteries that bore his name, while he sought by song to mitigate the terrors of the lower world, and to overcome the powers of darkness. To these many other names might be added; and among them many which did not deduce their descent, like most indeed, from Phœnicia and Egypt, but are clearly to be traced, as well as the doctrines and sacred customs they introduced, to the North; and, though they sprang more immediately from Asiatics on the northern side of the Caucasus, they were nearly allied to the nations dwelling further towards the North and West. The profound and concurrent researches of many modern scholars have adduced such numerous and repeated proofs from antiquity, of the existence of this Northern stratum in Greek antiquities, that this branch of Grecian history, formerly neglected, must no longer pass unobserved. The Greeks were of very various extraction; and in the different countries of Greece we may distinguish, along with the Hellenes, two if not more, principal nations, clearly distinct from the former. These were the Thracians in the Northern provinces, or at least in those immediately contiguous—a race for the most part of Northern descent, and, together with the Indian, the most numerous on the earth according to Herodotus—perhaps of the same origin with the nations on the banks of the Danube, or even

those further northward. There were, next, the Pelasgi, the real aborigines of Greece, the authors of those gigantic walls and constructions, which are known in Italy by the name of Cyclopean, and in Greece by that of Pelasgic, and some of which still exist, besides several others that existed in the Peloponnesus, and which are mentioned by the ancients. These Aborigines, or this primitive race of people, occur in many countries under the same, or at least very similar, traits—to them we must ascribe those monuments of architecture we have just spoken of, a certain knowledge of metals, some rude religious rites, without any mythology, which was only of later origin, nay without any names of specific divinities;—human sacrifices—manners and customs, if not absolutely savage, still very rude and barbarous, and a constant restlessness and a disposition to roam. Deucalion alone is to be considered as the ancestor of the Hellenes, as all the noble families of kings and heroes derived their descent from him, and the later tribes of Greece, the Æolians, the Dorians, and Ionians, took their names from his sons. According to every indication, this people would appear to be a Caucasian race of Asiatics, of Indian, or at least of a cognate, origin. When these Hellenes, Æolians and Dorians, had taken possession of Thessaly, of the adjacent countries, and the Peloponnesus, and had there formed settlements, the Pelasgi were every

where dispossessed, or oppressed, and thrown into the back-ground. But they certainly were not entirely extirpated, nor did they emigrate in full numbers; and it is beyond a doubt that various causes contributed to unite the old and new inhabitants of Greece; for here intermarriages were not entirely prohibited and rigidly prevented, as in India or Egypt, by the institution of castes; and the two nations were gradually formed into one race and one people, according as the circumstances or situation of one country or the other favoured such an union. And hence we can understand why Herodotus, for example, should have attributed to the Ionians in particular much that was Pelasgic, as if under this new denomination they were in all essential points the ancient Pelasgi, or had mingled more with the latter, and were not of such a pure Hellenic race as the Dorians: for in other respects, the Pelasgi and Hellenes are represented as being originally two perfectly distinct nations. The people of Thrace, too, although they continued as a separate nation to a much later period, undoubtedly mingled considerably with the Hellenic tribes that inhabited the borders of Thrace, or that lived among the inhabitants of that country.

The primitive inhabitants of Greece were in general extremely rude and barbarous in their manners and tenets; until the noble race of Prometheus, the sons of Deucalion, who had

come from the regions of Mount Caucasus, and colonies still more civilized that had emigrated from Phœnicia, Egypt, and other countries of Asia, exerted their beneficial influence, and gave by degrees an entirely new form and fashion to the people of Greece, and even to the country itself. For that region, which afterwards presented so beautiful an aspect, which was so richly endowed, and splendidly embellished by the hand of Nature, was, until it had been well cultivated and fertilized, and until the power of boisterous elements had been subdued, a complete wilderness, and the scene of many violent revolutions of nature; which were very naturally considered as a sort of partial and feeble imitation of the destructive and universal flood of elder times, when water was the all-prevailing element on the earth. In Greece there was an old obscure tradition, of the original existence of a continent called Lectonia, which occupied a portion of the subsequent Greek sea, and of which the islands form now the only existing remains; the rest of the continent having been sunk and destroyed, at the very time when the Black Sea, which had been originally connected with the Caspian, burst through the Bosphorus, and precipitated its waves into the Mediterranean. At this very remote period, all Thessaly was one vast lake, till, in a natural catastrophe of a similar kind, the river Peneus burst its way through a defile

of rocks, and found on outlet into the sea. The lake Copais in Bæotia in an inundation overflowed the whole circumjacent flat country in the time of Ogyges; and thus the name and tradition of Ogyges served afterwards to designate the epoch of those early floods. At a later period, and when the civilization of the Greeks was more advanced, in the true flourishing era of their power and literature, the two principal races among this people, the Ionians and the Dorians, were completely opposed to each other in arts and manners, in government, modes of thinking, and even in philosophy. Athens was at the head of the Ionic race; Sparta took the lead in the Doric confederacy; and this internal discord did not a little contribute towards the utter ruin of Greece, and towards the consummation of that internal and external anarchy that dragged all things into its abyss.

Now that we enter upon that period when all the great political events have been sufficiently described, and partly, at least, set forth with incomparable talent, by the great classical historians of antiquity; by a multitude of writers that have borrowed from that source, or have worked upon those lofty models; it would be idle to repeat what is universally known, and to recount, in long historical detail, how, after contests and struggles of less importance, the glory of Greece burst forth in all its lustre in her resistance to Persian might; how, soon after, she

exhausted her best strength in the great Peloponnesian civil war betwixt Sparta and Athens, and how both those states ruined themselves in the idle ambition of maintaining the ηγεμονια as they called it, or the superiority and preponderance in the political system of Greece;—how, after the short dominion of the Thebans under their single great man, Epaminondas, the Macedonians became lords of the ascendant, and ruled for a longer time with despotic sway;—and finally how Greece obtained an apparent freedom under the generous protection of Rome, and was soon after reduced to a state of permanent vassalage under her prefects and her legions. This instructive and, we may well say, eternal history may be read, studied, and meditated on in all its ample details and living clearness in the pages of the great classical historians of antiquity. The knowledge of all these historical facts must be here pre-supposed, and I must confine myself to a rapid and lively sketch of the intellectual character and moral life of the Greeks, in their relation to the rest of mankind, and according to the place which they occupy in universal history.

In this point of view, all that is universally interesting in the character, life, and intellect of the Greeks will be best and most easily classed under three categories. The first is the *divine* in their system of art, or the mythology that was so closely interwoven with their traditions and

their fictions, their whole arrangement of life, their customs, and political institutions; and which so much excites our astonishment and admiration. The second is their science of Nature—a science so natural to them, and which embraced all the objects of Nature and the world, as well as of history, and even man himself, with the utmost clearness of perception, sagacity of intellect, and beauty and animation of expression—a science that, from its earliest infancy down to its complete perfection in the writings of Plato and Aristotle, has established the lasting glory of the Greeks, and has had a deep and abiding influence on the human mind, through all succeeding ages. The third and last category, in this portrait of the Greek intellect and character, is the political rationalism in Greece's latter days, founded on those maxims and principles which had finally triumphed after the most violent contest of parties, and under which the state was entirely swayed by the arts of eloquence and the power of rhetoric, now become a real political authority in society. All that can be said truly to the honour of the ancient Greek states, and their Republican virtues, has been briefly noticed above. Their decay and general anarchy, and final subjugation by Rome, may be well accounted for by the decline of the Greek philosophy, and the consequent corruption of morals and doctrine—by that dominion of sophists, unparalleled at least

n ancient history, and whose pernicious art of a false rhetoric was the bane of public life, government, and all national greatness.

The marvellous and living mythology in the glorious old poetry of Greece justly occupies here the first place, for all arts, even the plastic arts, had their origin in this first Homeric source. And this fresh living stream of mythic fictions and heroic traditions which has flowed, and continues to flow, through all ages and nations in the West, proves to us, by a mighty historical experience, which determines even the most difficult problems (and this has been universally acknowledged in Christian Europe), that all classical education — all high intellectual refinement, is and should be grounded on poetry — that is to say, on a poetry which, like the Homeric, springs out of natural feelings, and embraces the world with a clear, intuitive glance. For there can be no comprehensive culture of the human mind, — no high and harmonious development of its powers, and the various faculties of the soul; unless all those deep feelings of life — that mighty, productive energy of human nature, the marvellous imagination, be awakened and excited, and by that excitement and exertion, attain an expansive, noble and beautiful form. This the experience of all ages has proved, and hence the glory of the Homeric poems, and of the whole intellectual refinement of the Greeks, which

has thence sprung, has remained imperishable. Were the mental culture of any people founded solely on a dead, cold, abstract science, to the exclusion of all poetry; such a mere mathematical people — with minds thus sharpened and pointed by mathematical discipline, would and could never possess a rich and various intellectual existence; nor even probably ever attain to a living science, or a true science of life. The characteristic excellence of this Homeric poetry, and in general of all the Greek poetry, is that it observes a wise medium between the gigantic fictions of oriental imagination, even as the purer creations of Indian fancy display; and that distinctness of view, that broad knowledge and observation of the world, which distinguish the ages of prosaic narrative, when the relations of society become at once more refined and more complicated. In this poetry, these two opposite, and almost incompatible, qualities are blended and united— the fresh enthusiasm of the most living feelings of nature—a blooming, fertile, and captivating fancy, and a clear intuitive perception of life, are joined with a delicacy of tact, a purity and harmony of taste, excluding all exaggeration— all false ornament—and which few nations since the Greeks, none perhaps in an equal degree, certainly none before them, have ever possessed to a like extent.

This poetry was most intimately interwoven

with the whole public life of the Greeks—the public spectacles, games, and popular festivals were so many theatres for poetry: nay music and the gymnastic exercises were the groundwork, and formed almost the whole scope, of a high, polite, and liberal education among the Greeks. Both were so in a very wide, comprehensive and significant sense of the term. The gymnastic struggles, the peculiar object of the public games, and where the human frame attained a beautiful form and expansion by every species of exercise—the gymnastic struggles had a very close connection with, and may be said to have formed the basis for, the imitative arts, especially sculpture, which, without that habitual contemplation of the most exquisite forms afforded by these games, could never have acquired so bold, free, and animated a representation of the human body. Music, or the art of the Muses, included not only the art of melody, but the poetry of song. Still the plan of Grecian education and refinement was ever of too narrow and too exclusive a character; and when, at a later period, rhetoric came to form one of its elements, the Greeks considered it (what indeed it never should be considered) as a sort of gymnastic exercise for the intellect, a species of public spectacle, where eloquence, little solicitous about the truth, only sought to display its art or address in the combat. And in the same way philosophy, when the Greeks

attained a knowledge of it, came to be regarded, according to the narrow and exclusive principles of their system of education, as nothing more than a species of intellectual melody, the internal harmony of thought and mind—the music of the soul; till later, by means of the sophists and popular sycophants that deluded their age, it sunk into the all-destructive abyss of false rhetoric, which was the death of true science and genuine art, and which, in the shape of logic and metaphysics, had as injurious an influence on the schools as a false political eloquence had on the state and on public life. That principle of harmony which formed the leading tenet of the primitive philosophy of Greece before the introduction of sophistry, was not an ignoble,—it was even a beautiful, idea, although it might be far from solving the high problems and questions of philosophy, or satisfying the deeper enquiries of the human mind.

It was from these public games, popular festivals, and great poetical exhibitions, which had such a mighty and important influence on the whole public life of the Greeks, and which served to knit so strongly the bonds of the Hellenic confederacy, that, by means of the odes, specifically designed for such occasions, the theatre, and the whole dramatic art of the Greeks, derived their origin. This poetry, which is less generally intelligible to other nations and times than the Homeric poems, because it enters more

deeply into the individual life of the Greeks, does not display less invention, sublimity, and depth of art, from that ideal beauty which pervades its whole character, and from its lofty tone of feeling. Even the Doric odes of Pindar, amid their milder beauties, rise often to the tragic grandeur of the succeeding poets, or to the comprehensive and epic fulness of the old Mæonian bard.

No nation has as yet been able to equal the charm and amenity of Homer, the elevation of Æschylus, and the noble beauty of Sophocles; and perhaps it is wrong even to aspire to their excellence, for true beauty and true sublimity can never be acquired in the path of imitation. Euripides, who lived in the times when rhetoric was predominant, is ranked with the great poets we have named by such critics only, as are unable to comprehend and appreciate the whole elevation of Grecian intellect, and to discern its peculiar and characteristic depth. It is worthy of remark, as it serves to show the general propensity of Grecian intellect for the boldest contrasts, that these loftiest productions of tragedy, and which have retained that character of unrivalled excellence through all succeeding ages, were accompanied by the old popular comedy which, while its inventive fancy dealt in the boldest fictions of mythology, and in the humorous exhibitions of the Gods, made it its peculiar business to fasten on all the follies

of ordinary life, and to exhibit them to public ridicule without the least reserve.

That the sensual worship of Nature, the basis of all Heathenism, and more particularly so of the Greek idolatry, must have had a very prejudicial influence on Greek morals; that the want of a solid system of Ethics, founded on God and divine truth, must have given rise to great corruption even in a more simple period of society; and that this already prevalent corruption must have increased to a frightful extent in the general degradation of the state—is a matter evident of itself; and it would be no difficult task to draw from the pages of the popular comedy we have just spoken of, and from other sources, a terrific picture of the moral habits of the Greeks. Yet I know not whether such a description would be necessary, or even advantageous, for the purpose of this Philosophy of History—the more so, as it would not be difficult to draw from similar sources of immorality, and from the now usual statistics of vice and crime, a sketch of the moral condition of one or more Christian nations, that would by no means accord with the pre-conceived notion of the great moral superiority of modern times. We may thus the more willingly rest contented with a general acknowledgment of the great moral depravity of mankind, which exists wherever mighty powers and strong motives of a superior order do not counteract it, and which must have

broken out more conspicuously there, where, as among the Greeks, the prevailing religion was a Paganism that promoted and sanctioned sensuality. In regard to the poetry and plastic arts of the Greeks, it must even strike us as a matter of astonishment that it is in comparatively but few passages, and few works, this Pagan sensuality appears in a manner hurtful to dignity of style and harmony of expression. It would not at least have surprised us, had this defect been oftener apparent, when we consider the doctrines and views of life generally prevalent in antiquity; for it was in most cases, less the sterner dictates of morality that prevented the recurrence of this defect than an exquisite sense of propriety, which even in art is the outward drapery that girds and sets off beauty. Besides, a mere conventional concealment cannot be imposed as a law on the art of sculpture; our moral feelings are much less offended by the representation of nudity in the pure noble style of the best antiques, than by the disguised sensuality which marks many spurious productions of modern art. In poetry and in art, at least in the elder and flourishing period, the Greeks have, for the most part, attained to internal harmony — in philosophy they were much less fortunate—and least of all in public life, which was almost always distracted, and at last utterly jarring, dissonant, and ruinous.

I called the science of the Greeks a *natural* science, and in this quality, which it possessed in so eminent a degree, it affords us the highest instruction, and is of itself extremely interesting; for in its origin, this science proceeded chiefly, almost exclusively, from nature — pursued a sequestered and solitary path — a stranger to poetry and to the mythology which was there predominant, far removed from public and political life—and often even in an attitude of hostility towards the state. The physical sciences, and particularly natural history, were created by the Greeks—so was the science of medicine, in which Hippocrates is still honoured as the greatest master; and geometry and the ancient system of astronomy were handed down to posterity, considerably enlarged and improved by the labours of the Greeks. In the second place, Grecian science may be denominated a *natural* science, because, as it directed its attention successively to the various objects of the world, of life, and to man himself, it ever took a thoroughly natural view of all things, and even in self-knowledge, in practical life, and in history, sought to seize and comprehend the nature of man, and to unfold the character of his Being, with the utmost precision of language, and according to conceptions derived exclusively from life. Thus when Plato and his followers direct their philosophical enquiries to objects lying beyond, and far exalted above, the sphere of Nature and real life,

we must regard these inquiries as exceptions from the ordinary practice of Grecian intellect, and from the ruling spirit of its speculations; in the same way as the expeditions of Alexander the Great form an exception from the usual routine of Grecian politics. Lastly, Grecian science may be denominated a *natural* science, because philosophy, founded on the old basis of poetry and classical culture, allied to history, and the language and symbols of tradition, assumed in general a form clear, beautiful, animated, and eminently conformable to Nature and the mind of man; and however much this philosophy may at times have been lost and bewildered in the void of a false dialectic, it still never perished in the petrifying chill of abstract speculations. And even Plato, though his philosophy so far transcended the ordinary sphere of Grecian intellect, had been well nurtured in Hellenic eloquence, art, and culture—and, in all these, was himself the greatest master.

With this profound and lofty feeling for Nature, did the early philosophers of Greece, who were chiefly Ionians, like Thales, Anaximenes, and Heraclitus, consider respectively water, air, and fire, as the primary powers of Nature and of all things; and it was only Anaxagoras, the master of Socrates, who first clearly expounded the nature of that supreme and divine Intelligence which created nature and

regulates the world. Prior to this philosopher, Heraclitus had asserted this doctrine, perhaps with greater purity—certainly with more depth and penetration; but in his obscure writings it is less intelligibly expressed. With his supreme Intelligence in Nature, Anaxagoras conjoined the ομοιομερια, that is to say, not the real atoms of a lifeless matter, but rather the animated substance of material life. Thus his doctrine was a simple system of dualism, quite in harmony, it would seem, with the feelings of those early ages, as we have noticed a similar system in the history of Indian philosophy. These old Ionian philosophers in general regarded only the internal life in Nature and all existence—the constant change and endless vicissitude in the world and in all things; and hence many of them began to doubt, and at last finally denied, the existence of anything steadfast and enduring. According to that law and march of contrast, which Grecian intellect, whether consciously or unconsciously, invariably pursued, these Ionian philosophers were now opposed by the school of Parmenides, which inculcated the doctrine of an all-pervading unity—and taught that this principle was the first and last, the sole, true, permanent, and eternal Being. Although this system was at first propounded in verse, it was by no means, in its essential and ruling spirit, a poetical Pantheism, like that of the Indians—but more congenial with the intellectual

habits of the Greeks, it was a Pantheism thoroughly dialectic, which at first regarded all change as an illusion and idle phenomenon, and at last positively denied the possibility of change. Between these two extreme schools appeared the great disciple of Socrates, who sought, by a path of inquiry completely new, completely foreign to the Greeks—by a range of speculation which soared far above the world of sense, and outward experience, as well as above mere logic, to return to the supreme Godhead, infinitely exalted above all nature—deriving the notion of the Deity from immediate intuition, primeval revelation, or profound internal reminiscence. By this doctrine of reminiscence, which is the fundamental tenet of the Platonic system, this philosophy has a strong coincidence or affinity with the Indian doctrine of the Metempsychosis, by the supposition it involves of the prior existence of the human soul. To such a notion of the pre-existence of the soul, in the literal sense of the term, no system of Christian philosophy could easily subscribe. But if, as there is no reason to prevent us, we should understand this Platonic notion of reminiscence in a more spiritual sense —as the awakening or resuscitation of the consciousness of the divine image implanted in our souls—as the soul's perception of that image; this theory would then perfectly coincide with the Christian doctrine of the divine image ori-

ginally stamped on the human soul, and of the internal illumination of the soul by the renovation of that image—and hence we ought in no way to be astonished that this Platonic mode of thinking, for such it is rather than any exclusive system,—as it is the first great philosophy of revelation clothed and propounded in an European form—should have ever appeared so captivating to the profound thinkers of Christianity. In Plato's time, that host of Sophists who had sprung out of the dialectic contests of the earlier philosophy, out of its rejection and disbelief of every thing permanent, immutable and eternal in Nature, in life, and in knowledge, as well as out of the democratic spirit of the age, and the ever prevailing immorality — in Plato's time, that host of Sophists completely bewildered and confused the public mind, poisoned all principle and morality in their very source, and accomplished the ruin of society in Greece in general, and in Athens in particular. And the masterly portrait which Plato has given us of these Sophists exhibits well this race, and the pernicious influence they exerted over Grecian intellect, and the whole circle of Grecian states; and this political influence of the Sophists forms the third epoch in the history of Greece, which, by means of these popular sycophants, became daily more and more democratic, till at last it perished in anarchy.

The more ancient philosophers of Greece

lived almost all in a state of retirement from public life, taking no part in political affairs, or evincing very evident sentiments of hostility to the governments and republics of their native country. They were almost all unfriendly to the prevailing principles of democracy; and the ideal governments, which they, as well as Plato, have sketched, were all in the spirit of a very rigid aristocracy of virtue and law—evincing a very marked predilection for that form of government as it existed, though in a state of great degeneracy, among the Doric Greeks. Long before Plato, the Pythagoreans had inculcated doctrines perfectly similar, or at least of a very kindred nature; and with the view and purpose of introducing their principles into public life, by which undoubtedly the governments and the whole frame of society in Greece, as well as the whole system of Grecian thought, would have assumed a totally new and different shape. But before the Pythagorean confederacy, which was so widely diffused through the Greek states of Southern Italy, was able to accomplish its design, the violent re-action of an opposite party of thinkers destroyed it, or at least deprived it of all ascendancy and political influence.

The age of Aristotle concurred with that of the Macedonian sway to terminate anarchy of every kind. To the old evil of a false dialectic, which had become an inveterate habit, and, as

it were, a second nature to Grecian intellect, he endeavoured to oppose his ample and substantial logic—and this must be regarded not so much as a wonderful *organum*, a living and never-failing source of scientific truth, but rather as a remedy for that disease of a false, sophistical rhetoric, so prevalent in his own age, and the one immediately preceding—and which had brought about the ruin of all truths, and an universal anarchy of doctrines, even in practical life. With a perspicacious, penetrative, and comprehensive intellect, he has reduced all the philosophic, and all the historical science of preceding ages and of his own time, to a clear, well-ordered system, for the ample instruction of posterity:—in both these sciences, as well as in natural history, he has remained, down to the latest time, the master-guide. In those parts of his philosophy which lie between this natural science and the old dialectic contests, in its primary and fundamental principles, the system of Aristotle, when rightly understood, contains much that leads to the most dangerous errors, especially in his notion of God; though we cannot with justice impute to him the abuse which has been made of his philosophy in subsequent ages. Notwithstanding the many excellent things which are to be found in the Ethics of Aristotle, considered merely as an effort of unassisted reason; yet in all the enquiries after a higher truth—after the first no-

tion of the divine which, in the elder philosphy of nature, was so imperfectly understood, and which in the consummate rationalism of Aristotle was completely misapprehended—in all these important enquiries, the Stagyrite is far from being such a guide as Plato; and his philosophy is not like the Platonic, a scientific introduction to the Christian revelation, and to the knowledge of divine truths. The later systems of philosophy among the Greeks were, with some slight variations of form, mere repetitions, often only mere combinations and compilations, of the ancient philosophy; or they exhibited a thorough degeneracy of science and intellect, as in the atomical system of Epicurus, which even on life and morals had an atomical influence.

The Greek states have long since disappeared from the face of the earth—the republics, as well as the Macedonian kingdoms founded by Alexander, have long since ceased to exist. Many centuries—near two thousand years, have elapsed, since not a vestige remains of all that ancient greatness and transitory power. If the celebrated battles and other mighty events of those ages are still known to us; if they still excite in us a lively interest, it is principally because they have been delineated with such incomparable beauty, such instructive interest, by the great classical writers. It is not the republican governments of Greece, nor the

brief and fleeting period of Grecian liberty, which was so soon succeeded by civil war and anarchy—it is not the universal empire of Macedon, which was but of short duration, and was soon swallowed up in the Roman or Parthian domination—it is not these that mark out the place which Greece occupies in the great whole of universal history, nor the mighty and important part she has had in the civilization of mankind. The share allotted to her was the light of science in its most ample extent, and in all the clear brilliance of exposition which it could derive from art. It is in this intellectual sphere only that the Greeks have been gifted with extraordinary power, and have exerted a mighty influence on after-ages. Plato and Aristotle, far more than Leonidas and Alexander the Great, contain nearly the sum and essence of all truly permanent and influential, which the Greeks have bequeathed to posterity. It is evident that I include under these great names the whole classical culture which formed the basis of this Greek science—the general refinement of minds—the fine arts, and above all, the glorious old poetry of Greece. We have to mention another department of Greek science, wherein from its natural clearness and liveliness, its profound observation of man, the most eminent success was attained. And the pre-eminence consists in this—that historical art, as well as historical research were originated by the Greeks,

and that both have attained a degree of perfection which has been almost ever unknown to the Asiatic nations, and which even the moderns have only imitated by degrees upon the great models of antiquity. The father of history, Herodotus, has not been without reason compared to Homer, on account of his manifold charms, and the clearness and fulness of his narrative. We remain in utter astonishment, when we reflect on the depth and extent of his knowledge, researches, enquiries, and remarks on the history and antiquities of the various nations of the earth, and of mankind in general. The deeper and more comprehensive the researches of the moderns have been on ancient history, the more have their regard and esteem for Herodotus increased. The later classical historians display much rhetoric; but this was natural, when we consider what a mighty influence rhetoric exerted on public life, and that it had become an all-ruling power in the state. This false rhetoric, that idle pomp of words, the death of all genuine poetry and higher art—as the endless strifes of a false dialectic, are the ruin of all sane and legitimate science, of all precision of intellect, and soundness of judgment—this false rhetoric, by the exclusively sophistical turn which it gave to the public mind and public opinion, accelerated the downfal of government, and of all public virtues in Greece.

The third category or sphere of Grecian in-

tellect and Grecian life which I designated after that of divine art, and natural science, and the varied knowledge of man, was *political rationalism.** I have used that expression, chiefly in reference to the later ages of the Greek Republics, as it is the quality which eminently distinguished them from the Asiatic states, and those of modern Europe.

In the later ages of Athens, and of the other democratic states, the rationalist principles of freedom and equality were the sole prevailing and recognized maxims of government. Considered in this historical point of view, the chief difference between the two principal forms of government consists in this—that the republic is, or at least tends to be, the government of Reason; while monarchy is founded on the higher principles of faith and love. But the distinction lies rather in the ruling spirit—the moral principle which animates these two governments, than in their mere outward form. Republics which are founded on ancient laws and customs, on hereditary rights and usages, on faith in the sanctity of hereditary right, on attachment to ancestral manners (as was undoubtedly the case with the Greek republics in the early ages of their history), such states, so far from being opposed to the true spirit of monarchy, are, to all essential purposes, of a kin-

* In the German *Vernunft-staat*, the government of reason.

dred nature with it. Such, too, are those happy republics which, content with the narrow limits of their power and existence, at peace with other states, devoid of ambition, firmly wedded to their ancient rights and customs, figure but little on the arena of history, and occupy but small space in the columns of the gazetteer. In a monarchy, attachment to the hereditary sovereign and to the royal dynasty is the corner-stone and the firmest pillar of the state—whole provinces may be conquered, and important battles may be lost; but while this foundation of love remains unshaken—while this principle is in active operation, the edifice of the state will stand unmoved.

The next foundation of monarchy is faith in ancient rights—in the heritage of ancestral customs and privileges, according to the several relations of the different classes of the state; and we should beware, in a monarchial government, not to touch or violate with an incautious hand, or change without necessity, hereditary rights and usages which time has consecrated, for such heedless changes shake the very foundations of the social edifice. When a monarchy is founded on a written contract (whether it be intended as a sort of treaty of peace, with some party aspiring to dominion in the state, or be only the successful experiment of some scientific theory of political rationalism), such a government, though it may preserve the outward form, has ceased in

all essential points, to be a monarchy according to the old acceptation of the term. An ab-absolute government, whatever shape it may assume, whether it take the form of republicanism, and adopt the rationalist principles of freedom and equality—principles which in the nature of things, and according to the very constitution of human reason, are almost ever inseparable from a spirit of progressive encroachment in foreign policy, (as is sufficiently proved by the inordinate ambition, the insatiable thirst of power which distinguished the great republics of antiquity, in proportion as they became more democratic, and more a prey to anarchy,) or whether the absolute government assume the lawless and illegitimate sway of a military despotism — such a government may indeed be established in a sort of equipoise, circumscribed within tolerably reasonable limits, and preserved at least in its physical existence by means of such a written compact as we have spoken of above. But the old Christian state—the state which is founded in faith and love—can be renovated and re-established; not by the mere dead letter of any theory, though it should contain nothing but the pure dogmatic truth—but by faith—by love—by the religious energy of all the great fundamental principles of moral life.

END OF LECTURE VIII.

LECTURE IX.

Character of the Romans.—Sketch of their conquests.—On strict law, and the law of equity in its application to History, and according to the idea of divine justice.—Commencement of the Christian dispensation.

INSTEAD of that astonishing variety in the states, the races, the political constitutions, the manners, styles of art and modes of intellectual cultivation, which divided from its very origin the social existence of Greece—a division which gave a more rich and diversified aspect to Greek civilization—the ancient history of Italy shews us, on the contrary, how every thing merged more and more in the one, eternal, imperishable, ever-prosperous, ever-progressive, and at last all-devouring, city—Rome. The first ages, indeed, of Italy—the primitive nations that settled that country—such as the Pelasgi, whose early historical existence is attested by those Cyclopean, or more properly,

Pelasgic walls and constructions still extant there —the Etruscans, (according to some authors, descended from the more northern race of Rhœtians) from whom the Romans borrowed so many of their idolatrous rites and customs—the Sabines and Samnites, the Latins and the Trojans—lastly the Celts in Northern, and the Greeks in Southern, Italy—all in their several relations to one another, and in the various commixture of their origin and progress, open a wide field of intricate investigation and perplexing research to the historical enquirer. But from the general point of view taken in universal history, all this antiquarian learning soon falls into the background, in the presence of that great central city which quickly absorbs into itself all the ancient states of Italy, and Italy itself, and which, though originally composed of many heterogeneous elements — Latin, Sabine and Etruscan—still was very early moulded into an unity of character—and whose ulterior growth and progress, slow indeed at first, but soon as fearfully rapid as it was immeasurably great, principally attracts the notice of the historical observer. In the later, and still more in the early, ages of Rome, the national idolatry was less poetically wrought and adorned than that of the Greeks—it was altogether much simpler, ruder and more serious than the latter. Even the word *religio*, to take it in its first signification as a second tie, corresponds to a far more defi-

nite and serious object than can be found in the gay mythology of the popular religion of the Greeks. Idolatrous rites were closely interwoven into the whole life of the ancient Romans. As the twins of Mars, Romulus and Remus, who were suckled by the she-wolf, were called the founders of the city; so Mars himself was honoured by the Romans as their real progenitor, and principal national divinity—particularly under the name of Gradivus, that is to say the swift for battle, or the strider of the earth. The sacred shields of brass which, on certain appointed festivals, were borne in the military dances, the Palladium, the sceptre of the venerable Priam, formed, together with similar relics of antiquity, the seven holy pledges of the eternal duration and ever flourishing increase of the seven-hilled city, which was honoured under three different names; one whereof was ever kept secret—while the other two referred to its blooming strength and ever enduring power. The ancient cities of the Greeks, those of the Italian nations, whether akin to them, or otherwise, possessed indeed their tutelary deities, their particular sanctuaries, their highly revered Palladium, some ancient oracles, and certain religious rites and festivals consecrated to their honour. But it would not be easy to find another example where the traditionary reverence, we might almost say, the old hereditary deification of the city, had

from the earliest period, taken such deep root in the minds of men; and where such a formal worship was so intimately interwoven with manners, customs, and even maxims of state, as among the Romans. And when an universal monarchy had sprung out from this single city, it was still that city—it was still eternal Rome that was ever regarded, not merely as the centre, but as the essence of the whole—the personified conception of the state—the grand idea of the empire. The early traditions of the Romans which, though from the commencement of the city they assume the garb of authentic history, (as in the pages of Livy for instance,) yet are for a long time to be regarded mostly as mere traditions,—evince a fact well entitled to our consideration,—as it serves to show how that strong, inflexible, but harsh, Roman character, such as the later records of history display, manifested itself even in the earliest infancy of this people;—it is this, that among no other nation, did historical recollections even of the remotest antiquity exert such a powerful influence on life, or strike so deep a root in the minds of men. Nearly five hundred years had elapsed since the time of the elder Brutus, when, in the Roman world now so mightily changed, a citizen appealed to the second Brutus in these words—"Brutus, thou sleepest"—as if to urge him to that deed which the first had perpetrated on the proud Tarquin, and by

which that celebrated name had become identified with the idea of a bold deliverer. An ardent hatred towards all kings, and towards royalty itself, which from that period remained ever deeply fixed in the Roman mind, characterised this people even in the most ancient period of their history. Not only in the remarks and reflections of the later Roman historians on the first ages of Rome, but in facts themselves, as in the case of Spurius Cassius, we may trace the natural concomitant of this hatred—a passionate jealousy of all powerful party-chiefs, and democratic leaders, who were perhaps suspected, or probably convicted of aspiring to supreme power in the state, and aiming at the establishment of tyranny—as if the Romans had even then a clear presentiment of the inevitable fate that awaited an empire like theirs, and of the quarter whence their ruin would proceed. Even in the first ages, the Patricians and Plebeians appear on the historical arena, not only as separate classes, such as existed in almost all ancient states, and between whom no matrimonial ties could be formed originally at Rome; but as political parties, in a state of mutual hostility, each of which strove to obtain the ascendancy in the forum and in the state.

The old Romans of these early times were strangers to those various systems of legislation, those rhetorical treatises of jurisprudence, con-

ceived mostly on democratic principles, or to those opposite political theories composed in an aristocratic spirit, which the Greeks then possessed in such abundance. On the contrary, the Romans manifested even then, in the primitive period of their existence, a deep, perspicacious, practical sense, and a mighty political instinct, which showed itself in their first institutions of state. Even in the first idea of the Tribunate—as a regular mode of popular representation—an element of opposition introduced into the very constitution of the state—there was contained the germ of that mighty political power and action, which afterwards a man of energetic character, like Tiberius Gracchus, knew how to exert. This power, had it been kept within due limits, might have proved most beneficial to the community; and a single man, endowed with such a character, and animated by the same spirit of a true patriotic opposition, has often accomplished more at Rome, than whole parliaments in modern free states. The authority of the Censor, negative and restrictive in itself, but still not merely judicial—and which over the conduct of persons was very extensive—the exceptional institution of the Dictatorship, in the early ages of Rome by no means so dangerous—were so many just, and practical political discoveries of the Romans, which evince their statesman-like genius, and which even in later times, among other nations,

and under various forms, have served as real and effectual elements in the constitution of states.

The interest of those two parties—the Plebeians and the Patricians—concurred fully but in one point—the desire which both had of constantly invading the neighbouring nations, and obtaining landed possessions for themselves, in the conquests they made for the state. The Plebeians ever and again cherished the hope of being able to obtain for their profit, and that of the poorer citizens, a sort of distribution of the state-lands won in war. But as the Patricians were mostly invested with all the high offices and dignities in war as well as peace, they knew how to turn all the opportunities of conquest to their best advantage, however much they might on particular occasions postpone their private interests as individuals to the general interests of the state. Although, so long as their ancient principles remained unchanged, the Romans were distingnished for the utmost disinterestedness in regard to their country, and for great simplicity of manners, and even frugality in private life, they were in all their foreign enterprises, even in the earliest times, exceedingly covetous of gain, or rather of land; for it was in land, and the produce of the soil, that their principal, and almost only wealth consisted. The old Romans were a thoroughly agricultural people; and it was only at a later

period that commerce, trades and arts were introduced among them; and even then they occupied but a subordinate place. Agriculture was even highly honoured by the Romans; and while almost all the celebrated, and in general, most of the proper, names among the Greeks were derived from gods and heroes, and had a poetical lustre, and glorious significancy, it is a circumstance characteristic of the Romans, that the names of many of their most distinguished families, such as Fabius, Lentulus, Piso, Cicero and many others were taken from agriculture, and from vegetables; while others again, as Secundus, Quintus, Septimus, and Octavius, are tolerably prosaic, and are derived from the numbers of the old popular reckoning. The science of agriculture forms one of the few subjects on which the Romans produced writers truly original. That of jurisprudence, in which they were most at home, which they cultivated with peculiar care, and which they very considerably enlarged, had its foundation in the written laws of the primitive period of their history; and in their elder jurisprudence, the Agrarian system very evidently prevails. As a robust, agricultural people, they were eminently fitted for military service; and in practised vigour and constancy under every privation, the Roman infantry with the vigorous masses of its legion, surpassed all military bodies that have ever been organized.

The Roman state from its origin, and according to its first constitution, was nothing else than a well organized school of war, a permanent establishment for conquest. Among other nations, as among the Persians and Greeks, the desire of military glory and the lust of conquest was only a temporary enthusiasm, called forth by some special cause, or some mighty motive —a sudden sally—the thought of a moment. Among the Romans it is precisely the systematically slow and progressive march of their first conquests, their inflexible perseverance, their unremitting activity, the vigilant use of every advantageous opportunity, which strike the observer, and explain the cause of their mighty success in after-times. That unshaken constancy under misfortune, which ever characterised the Romans, they displayed even at this early period during the conquest of their city by the Gauls; though this misfortune, like that people itself, was but a transient calamity. In general, the Romans never evinced greater energy than when they were overcome, or when they met with an unexpected resistance. Sometimes in a moment of extreme urgency, their generals, like the Consul Decius Mus, taking a chosen body of troops, invoked the national Gods, devoted themselves to death, and rushed on the superior forces of the enemy, whereby though they fell the victims of their zeal, they saved the army from the menaced ignominy of.

defeat, and achieved a signal victory. With such a character, such unshaken fortitude and perseverance under misfortune, we can well conceive that in a state so constituted like theirs, the Romans, by their indefatigable activity in war, should in no very great space of time have conquered and subdued all the surrounding nations and states of Italy. It was thus they successively overcame the kindred and confederated tribes of Latium, and the rude Sabines; that, after a long and obstinate siege of the Tuscan city of Veii, they became masters of the Etrurian league, lords of the beautiful Campania, and vanquished the warlike Samnites on the Apennine range, and on the coast of the Adriatic. They now cast their eyes on the rich provinces of Magna Græcia. In the war against Tarentum, which was in alliance with Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, they came for the first time in contact with the great extra-Italic Greek powers, and had to encounter, in the ranks of the enemy, the unwonted spectacle of war-elephants, which were there employed according to the Asiatic custom. After the loss of the first battles, they were victorious; and they now added Apulia and Calabria to their conquests. Each step in the career of victory drew after it new embarrassments, new occasions, and new matter for future wars. The inhabitants of Syracuse, who had been for some time governed by tyrants, formed on the retreat of Pyrrhus, an alliance

with the Carthaginians, then masters of half of Sicily, and sought their protection against the Romans, who were confederated with their enemies, another party in the island. This brought on the first Punic war with that Republic, then mistress of the sea. In this warfare against Pyrrhus and the Carthaginians, the Romans, who had been hitherto confined within the secluded circle of the petty states of Italy, appeared for the first time on the great historical theatre of the then political world. In that age which was immediately subsequent to the time of Alexander the Great, the different Macedonian and other Greek powers of importance formed, together with Egypt and Carthage, a variously connected system of states, in one respect, not unlike the political system of modern Europe, at the end of the 17th and during the greater part of the 18th century. For, according to a principle of the balance of power, each state sought to strengthen itself by alliances, and to repress an overwhelming ascendancy, without on that account at all relaxing its efforts for its own aggrandizement. That on one hand, the fluctuating condition and internal troubles of those countries, and on the other, the fresh youthful vigour, the steady perseverance and constancy of the Roman people, would soon put an end to this system of equilibrium—to these political oscillations between the different states, and bring about the complete triumph and de-

cided ascendancy of the Romans, might indeed have been easily foreseen, and was in the very nature of things. After the first Punic war, the Romans to the conquest of Sicily added that of Corsica and Sardinia; and they next subdued the Cisalpine Gauls in the North of Italy. When even Hannibal, the most formidable enemy the Roman Republic ever had to encounter, and the one who had the most deeply studied its true character, and the danger threatening the world from that quarter; when even he, after the many great victories which, in a long series of years, he had obtained over the Romans, in the second Punic war; though he shook the power, was unable to break the spirit of this people;—when this was the case, one might regard the great political question of the then civilized world as settled; and it could no longer be a matter of doubt that that city justly denominated Strength, and which even from of old had been the idol of her sons, (who accounted every thing as nought in comparison with her interests); that that city, I say, was destined to conquer the world, and establish an empire, the like whereof had never yet been founded by preceding conquerors. The second Punic war terminated under the elder Scipio before the walls of Carthage, and it completed the destruction of that rival of Rome, at least as a political power. The Princes and states that while it was yet time, should have

formed a firm and steadfast league against the common foe, fell now separately under the sword of the victors, and the yoke of conquest. In the further progress of their triumphs, the conquerors knew how to assume a certain character of generosity, and give a certain colour of magnanimity to their acts, in the eyes of a gazing and terrified world. Thus, for instance, after the defeat of Philip, King of Macedon, they declared to deluded Greece that she was free; and again, Antiochus the Great, whose arrogance had given offence to many, and whose overthrow was in consequence the subject of very general joy, was compelled to cede the Lesser Asia as far as Mount Taurus; and the victors gave away the conquered provinces and kingdoms to the Princes in their alliance, and affected not to have the intention of subduing and keeping all for themselves. For it was yet much too soon to let the unconquered states and nations perceive that all, without distinction, were destined, one after the other, to become the provinces of the all-absorbing empire of Rome. Thus now overpassing the limits of Greece, the Romans had obtained a firm footing in Asia; and this first step was soon enough to be succeeded by other and still further advances. Historians have often remarked the decisive moment when Cæsar, after an instant's reflection and delay, crossed the Rubicon; but we may ask now, when Rome herself had passed

her Rubicon, where was that historical limit — that last boundary-line of ambition, after passing which no return, no halt were possible; if now, when all right, all justice, every human term and limit to ambition were lost sight of, if now idolized Rome in the fulness of her Pagan pride, and in her rapid career of destruction, marching from one crime against the world to another, and descending deeper and deeper into the abyss of interminable, foreign and domestic bloodshed, was, from the summit of her triumphs, to sink beyond redemption, down to Caligula and Nero?—We might point out, as an instance of this ever growing and reckless arrogance, the moment when the last king of Macedon,* not more than a century and a half from the death of Alexander the Great, was led in triumph into the city of the conquerors, a captive and in chains, to sate the eyes of the Roman populace. It entered into the high designs of Providence in the government of the world, during this middle and second period of universal history, that each of the conquering nations should receive its full measure of justice from another worse than itself, emerging suddenly from obscurity, and chosen as the instrument of its annihilation or subjection. But a still more decisive example of the spirit of Roman conquests was the cruel destruction of

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* Perseus.

Carthage in the third Punic war, begun without any assignable motive and from pure caprice. In this case no other resistance could be expected than the resistance of despair, which here indeed showed itself in all its energy. For seventeen days the city was in flames, and the numbers that were exterminated amounted to seven hundred thousand souls, including the women and children sold into slavery; so that this scene of horror served as an early prelude to the later destruction of Jerusalem. The wiser and more lenient Scipios had been against this war of extermination, and had had to contend with the self-willed rancour of the elder Cato; yet a Scipio conducted this war, and was the last conqueror over the ashes of Carthage. And this was a man universally accounted to be of a mild character and generous nature; and such he really was in other respects and in private life. But this reputation must be apparently estimated by the Roman standard, for whenever Rome and her interests were at stake, all mankind and the lives of nations were conconsidered as of no importance. Besides, it is really not in the power of a General to do away with the cruelty of any received system of warfare.

The example of the first great re-action of nations, too late aroused, was set by Greece in the war of the Achaian league. It terminated like all the preceding wars;—Corinth was con-

sumed, and its destruction involved that of an infinite number of noble and beautiful works of art, belonging to the better ages of Greece. Among the nations of the North and West that lived under a yet free and natural form of government, the Spaniards distinguished themselves by a peculiar obstinacy of resistance. Scipio was unable to conquer Numantia; the people who defended their liberty behind this rampart, set fire to the city, and the remaining defenders devoted themselves to a voluntary death. In the public triumph which the Romans celebrated on this occasion, they were able to exhibit only a few brave Lusitanians of a gigantic size. Now commenced the civil wars:—the first was occasioned by Tiberius Gracchus, then leader of the popular party at Rome. To undertake the complete justification of any one of the leading men in the Roman parties, would be an arduous, not to say impracticable task; yet we may positively assert of the elder Gracchus, that he was the best man of his party; as the same observation will apply to the Scipios in the opposite party of the Patricians. The proposal of Gracchus was this—that the rights of Roman citizens should be extended to the rest of Italy. It was in the very nature of things that such a change, or at least one very similar, should now take place, as in fact it did somewhat later; for after the conquest of so many provinces, the disproportion between the one

all-ruling city and the vast regions which it had subdued, was much too great to continue long. The armed insurrection of all the Italian nations that occurred soon after, sufficiently proves of what vital importance this measure was considered. But the pride of the ruling Patricians was extremely offended at this claim — they regarded it as an attempt to subvert the ancient constitution of the country—and, in the revolt that ensued, Tiberius Gracchus lost his life. From that time forward the principles apparently contended for on both sides were mere pretexts—whether it were the maintenance of the law, and of the ancient constitution, as asserted by the Patricians—or the just claims of the people, and the necessary changes which the altered circumstances of the times demanded, as alleged by the opposite party. It was now an open struggle for ascendancy between a few factious leaders and their partisans—a civil war carried on between fierce and formidable Oligarchs.

The effusion of blood was still greater in the troubles which the younger Caius Gracchus occasioned, and which had the same motive and the same object as the preceding commotions, though conducted with more animosity, and stained by greater crimes; and in the Patrician party, the noble Scipio, the hero of the third Punic war, fell a victim of assassination. Murders and poisoning were now every day more

common; and it became the practice to carry daggers under the mantle. On this occasion we may cite an observation, made not by any father of the church, or any Christian moralist; but by a celebrated German historian, who was in other respects an enthusiastic admirer of the Republican heroism of the ancients: "Rome, the mistress of the world," says he, "drunk with the blood of nations, began now to rage in her entrails." Of Marius and Sylla, on whom next devolved the conduct of the Patrician and Plebeian parties in the civil war, now conducted on a more extended scale, it is difficult to decide which of the two surpassed the other in cruelty and blood-thirstiness. Marius was indeed of a ruder and more savage character—but Sylla evinced perhaps a more systematic and relentless ferocity. Both were great generals; and it was only after obtaining splendid victories over foreign nations that they could think of turning their fury against their native city, after having spent their rage on the rest of mankind. The victories of Marius had delivered Rome from the mighty danger with which she had been menaced, by the irruption of the powerful tribes of the Cimbri and Teutones—the first fore-runner of the Great Northern migration. Danger served but to arouse the Roman people to more triumphant exertions; and every effort of hostile resistance, when once overcome, tended only to confirm their universal

dominion. The greatest and most formidable of these efforts of resistance was made by Mithridates, King of Pontus—it began by the murder of eighty thousand Romans in his dominions, and the simultaneous revolt of all the Italian nations against the Roman sway. No enemy of the Romans, since Hannibal, had formed such a deep-laid plan as Mithridates, whose intention it was to unite in one armed confederacy against Rome all the nations of the North, from the regions of Mount Caucasus, as far as Gaul and the Alps. By his victories over this enemy, Sylla prepared to return to Rome, torn and convulsed by civil war; and on his entry into the city, he treated it with all the infuriated vengeance of a conqueror, proscribed, gave full loose to slaughter, and perpetrated the most execrable atrocities. We may cite as a strange instance of the still surviving greatness of the Roman character, the fact, that Sylla, immediately after all this immense bloodshed, as if every thing had passed in perfect conformity to law and order, laid down the Dictatorship, retired peacefully to his estate, and there prepared to write his own history. In one respect, however, he was a flatterer of the multitude—he seems to have thoroughly understood the Roman people, for he was the first to introduce the games of the circus, those bloody combats of animals, those cruel Gladiatorial fights, which afterwards, under the Emperors, became like

bread, one of the most indispensable necessaries to the Roman people, and one of the most important objects of concern to its rulers. For these games, where the Roman eye delighted to contemplate men devoted to certain death contend and wrestle with the most savage animals, Pompey on one occasion introduced six hundred lions on the arena, and Augustus, four hundred panthers. Thus did a thirst for blood, after having been long the predominant passion of the party-leaders of this all-ruling people, become an actual craving—a festive entertainment for the multitude. And yet the Romans of this age, when we consider their conduct in war—in the battles and victories they won, or the strength of character they evinced, whether on the tented field, or on the arena of political contests, displayed an admirable, we might sometimes say a super-human, energy; so that we are often at a loss how to reconcile our admiration with the detestation which their actions unavoidably inspire. It was as if the iron-footed God of war, Gradivus, so highly revered from of old by the people of Romulus, actually bestrode the globe, and at every step struck out new torrents of blood; or as if the dark Pluto had emerged from the abyss of eternal night, escorted by all the vengeful spirits of the lower world, by all the Furies of passion and insatiable cupidity, by the blood-thirsty demons of murder, to establish his visible empire, and erect his

throne for ever on the earth. There can be no doubt that if the Roman history were divested of its accustomed rhetoric, of all the patriotic maxims and trite sayings of politicians, and were presented with strict and minute accuracy in all its living reality, every humane mind would be deeply shocked at such a picture of tragic truth, and penetrated with the profoundest detestation and horror. The licentiousness of Roman manners, too, was really gigantic; so that the moral corruption of the Greeks appears in comparison a mere infant essay in the school of vice.

The civil wars that next followed had in all essential points the same character with the first, though the fearful recollection, which still dwelt in men's minds, of the times of Marius and Sylla, tended to introduce at first a certain caution in all external proceedings; but in the course of their progress, these wars resumed the sanguinary character of the earlier civil contests. The proper circle of the Roman conquests, whose natural circumference was now marked out by all the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, was, in the second period of the civil wars, pretty well filled up by Cæsar and Pompey—by Pompey on the side of Asia, and by Cæsar on the side of the incomparably more formidable and more warlike nations of the North-western frontier. The conquest of Gaul was achieved by an uncommon effusion of human blood, even according to a Roman estima-

tion; and in the fifty battles related by Cæsar to have been fought in the Gallic war, in the complete subjugation of Spain, in the first wars on the Germanic frontiers and in Britain, as well as in the North of Africa against Juba, and against the son of Mithridates, the number of men left on the field is computed at twelve hundred thousand; and it is to be observed that as Cæsar is his own historian, these estimates have in part been given by himself. Yet was he praised for his goodness and the mildness of his character; but this praise must be measured by the Roman standard, and it is so far true that Cæsar was by no means vindictive, nor in general subject to passion, nor cruel without a motive. But, whenever his interest required it, he was careless what blood he spilled. The war between Cæsar and Pompey extended over all the provinces and regions of the Roman world; but, when conqueror, Cæsar formed and followed up the plan of completing and consolidating his victory by a system of lenity and conciliation. With all his indefatigable activity and consummate wisdom, with all the equanimity, prudence and energy of his character, he appears to have been still weak enough to imagine that the laurels he had acquired, in a way unequalled by any, were insufficient without the diadem—at least he gave occasion for such a suspicion. And so the second Brutus perpetrated on his person the act, for which the elder had been so

highly commended by all Roman historians. To relate the subsequent civil war of Brutus and Cassius, the reconciliation between Antony and Octavius, which involved the death of Cicero, the new rupture and war between the latter rivals, would serve only to swell this account of Rome and her destinies. These contests terminated in the establishment of monarchy, when the bloody proscriptions and civil wars of preceding times were forgotten, and Octavius, under the name of Augustus, appeared as the restorer of general peace, and the first absolute monarch of the Roman world;—a monarch whose long reign was on the whole very happy, when compared with previous times, and who during his life was half-deified by his subjects. Unlimited power was still clothed and half veiled in the old republican forms and expressions; and the recollection of Cæsar's fate was too present to the mind of the cautious Augustus, for him ever to neglect those forms and usages. It would really appear as if the world were destined to breathe for a time in peace, and to repose awhile from those earlier wars, before another and a higher peace descended, and became visible on the earth—and along with that other, higher and divine peace, a new and spiritual combat, waged not with the warlike parties of old, nor even with external and earthly power, but with the secret and internal cause of all those agitations, and all that injustice in the world.

A golden age of literature and poetry served now to adorn the general peace, which the mighty Augustus had conferred on the conquered world. This poetry was however but a late harvest which flourished towards the autumn of declining Paganism. Plautus and Terence we can regard merely as tolerably successful imitators of the Greeks. The beautiful diction and poetry of Virgil and Horace are in a general survey of literature chiefly valuable, inasmuch as they gave a noble refinement to a language which, in modern ages, and even still among ourselves, has been universally current; but all this poetry, including that, which the richer, more copious, and more inventive fancy of Ovid produced, can be considered by posterity as only a very thin gleaning after the full bloom and rich harvest of Grecian poetry and art. The real poetry of the Roman people lay elsewhere than in those artificial compositions of Greek scholars. It must be sought for in the festive games of the circus, which the prudent Augustus never neglected—in those theatrical combats, where the Gladiator, wrestling with death, knew how to fall and die with dignity, when he wished to obtain the plaudits of the multitude—in that circus, in fine, which so often afterwards resounded with the cry of an infuriated populace; — "Christianos ad leones," "the Christians to the lions, the Christians to the lions."

In the department of history, the case was very different from what it was in poetry. There the strong practical sense of the Romans, their profound political sagacity, the far wider circle of their political relations, gave them a decided advantage over the Greeks, who can shew no historian, possessed of the simple grandeur of Cæsar;—a style as rapid, and as straight-forward, as the exploits of Cæsar himself; or distinguished, like Tacitus, by that deep insight into the abyss of human corruption; while to Livy must be assigned a place by the side at least of the most illustrious Greeks. Among the Romans, political eloquence and philosophy, by that union of the two, such as prevails in Cicero's writings, as well as by the greater magnitude and practical importance of the subjects which both found for discussion, possess a peculiar charm and value. At this period the study of Greek philosophy was regarded and prosecuted by the Romans merely as an useful auxiliary to eloquence; and in the general depravity of morals, and amid the utter indifference for public misery and universal bloodshed, the philosophy of Epicurus naturally found the most admirers. It was only at a later period, when, under the better emperors, some men had undertaken the task of the moral regeneration of the Roman people and the Roman state, that those who entertained this great design sought for the last plank of national safety in the stoical

philosophy, which harmonized so well with the austere gravity of the Roman character. Then this philosophy obtained numerous followers among the Romans, as in earlier times it had found favour with many of them, especially among the Jurists.

In the whole circle of human sciences, jurisprudence is that department of intellect, in which the Romans have thought with the most originality, and have exerted the greatest influence; and which, by means of their writers, has obtained at once a very great degree of refinement, and a very wide diffusion. Cæsar had formed the project of a general digest of Roman laws; but this great design, like so many others he had entertained, was left unexecuted; and the age of Augustus at least was distinguished by two great lawyers of opposite schools. It is by the scientific jurisprudence which they have bequeathed to posterity, more than by any thing else, that the Romans have exerted a mighty influence on after-ages. It must strike us at first sight as singular, that a nation which, in its external relations, had risen to greatness, and indeed had founded its greatness, on so fearful an excess of injustice, should have risen to such eminence in the science of jurisprudence, as the Romans undoubtedly have. But the injustice of their conduct towards other states and nations this people well knew how to conceal under legal forms, and establish on legal titles;

and it often happened that, by the inconsistent conduct of other nations, they were able to give a colouring of equity to their acts, and shew on their side the strict letter of law.

In the next place, the Roman jurisprudence regarded more immediately the relations of private life, and all the artificial forms of civil law; and we can well conceive that a people like the Romans, distinguished for so sound a judgment and such strong practical sense, and whose minds were so exclusively bent on civil life, and its various relations, should have attained such distinction in the science of civil jurisprudence, notwithstanding the enormous iniquity of their conduct in the wider historical department of international law; and here we may find an explanation of that apparent contradiction between law and injustice, such as we find frequent examples of in human nature and in the records of history.

There is also another element of contradiction in the Roman law, considered both in itself, and in its relation to other codes—a contradiction which strongly pervaded the whole theory of that legislation, and may furnish us with a clue to a right judgment on the Roman jurisprudence, and on the influence it has exercised on posterity. This is the distinction between strict or absolute law, and the law of equity, that is to say, the law qualified by historical circumstances. In the Germanic law, as it is

a law of custom and ancient usage, a law qualified by times and circumstances, the principle of equity is more predominant; and we have, indeed, reason to regret that this native and original legislation of the modern European nations should, by the prevailing influence of the more scientific jurisprudence of ancient Rome, have been cast into the back-ground, in proportion as those nations began to mistake the true character of their historical antiquity. The Roman jurisprudence, as it deals in rigid formulas, and adheres to the strict letter, inclines more towards rigid and absolute law; and its spirit has something akin to the stern international policy of the ancient Romans. But is this strict and absolute law a fit criterion to apply to earthly concerns, can it be a true standard of human justice, in its more large and general applications to the great transactions of universal history, and in its relations to divine justice? Every thing absolute (and such undoubtedly is *strict law*, in the relations of private, and still more in those of public life), everything absolute is sure to provoke its contrary, and if continued, will occasion successive reactions, that can terminate only in the mutual destruction of conflicting parties — the inevitable result of all contests carried to extreme lengths — unless some higher principle of peace intervene to compose and determine them by a divine law of equity.

But if this conciliating principle do not pronounce its sentence, or if it be not attended to, extreme injustice only can spring from this rigid and inflexible application of extreme law; and this is quite in the spirit of the old saying of the Jurists, which we must here apply in a more general sense, in order to estimate with truth and accuracy the nature of the contests which divide the world. "Let justice be done," they say (and the word is here used in the juridical sense of strict and absolute law), "let justice be done, though the world should be ruined." And we may well say in reply:—Woe to mankind, woe to every individual, woe to the world, were they doomed to be finally judged according to this rigid justice, and this rigid justice only, by *Him* who alone has the power and the right to dispense such severe justice unto men, and judge them by its rules. But since such full and inexorable justice belongs to God only, who is incapable of error; and since all human justice is but the temporary delegate of the divine; it should necessarily be mild, indulgent, qualified by circumstances; and should on the principle of equity be as lenient as possible, and be ever mindful of its due limits. And this principle is applicable to the most important as well as the most insignificant relations of life, and is so thoroughly connected with them all that, according as we adopt the one or the other principle of strict and absolute law, or of mild

equity, the whole of our conduct, opinions, and views of the world must differ. The power of the state is only a temporary, and delegated, power, destined to accomplish the ends of divine justice; and this dignity, indeed, is sufficiently exalted, and the responsibility attached to it sufficiently great; but this supreme human justice, unless it disregard its own limits, as well as those of mankind, is not divine justice, nor the immediate authority of God, nor God himself.

The old hereditary vice and fundamental error of the Roman government, and indeed of the Roman people, was that political idolatry of the state, to which the false theory of strict and absolute law was of itself calculated to lead. Although the absolute power of Augustus was still somewhat veiled under the old forms of the Republic, yet even in his reign commenced the formal deification of the person of the Prince, and, under the succeeding emperors, it exceeded all bounds, and descended to the basest forms of adulation. And if even this idolatry had been paid, not so exclusively to the person of an Augustus or a Tiberius, as to the idea of the state identified with that person; and if thus the real object of that Pagan worship had been in the latest, as in the earliest, times, Rome, the eternally prosperous, the everlastingly powerful, the world-destroying, and people-devouring, Rome, to which every thing must fall a sacrifice; still

it was not the less a thorough political idolatry. And as a sensual worship of Nature eminently characterized the poetical religion of the Greeks —as the abusive rites of magic were peculiar to the false mysteries of Egypt—so this third and greatest aberration of Paganism,—political idolatry in its most frightful shape, formed the distinguishing character and leading principle of the Roman state, from the earliest to the latest period of its history.

Under Augustus the Roman empire was well nigh rounded off in extent, since the geographical situation, as we before observed, of all the countries bordering on the Mediterranean might be considered a sufficiently wide natural frontier. The counties on the coast of Africa were protected by the contiguous deserts; on the Northern side of the empire, which was more menaced by invasion, the strongly fortified borders of the Rhine and the Danube formed a secure barrier. Towards the eastern and Asiatic frontier, the Parthians were indeed a powerful and formidable enemy; but there was no probability they would ever seek, as the Persians had once done, to penetrate so far beyond their boundaries; while, on the other hand, the Romans had no real interest in extending their conquests further into that region, or into the interior parts of central Asia, as such a policy would only lead them further from the centre of their empire and their power, now unalterably fixed

in Italy and the old, eternal city. The thoughts and feelings of all the better Romans were no longer turned on the aggrandizement of their empire, but solely and exclusively on a great internal regeneration of public morals, and as far as was practicable, of the state itself, according to those ideal conceptions which they formed of old Rome in her better and more prosperous days. These projects of social regeneration were nearly in the same spirit and of the same tendency as those which the better emperors of succeeding ages, a Trajan and a Marcus Aurelius actually attempted to accomplish. Others again were filled with apprehensions for the future; and well indeed might they entertain the most alarming presentiments; for when the licentiousness of public morals was growing to a more and more fearful height, and a succession of indolent emperors was hastening the downfal of the state, the strong fortifications of the Northern frontier could afford little protection, and the nations of the North must burst in without resistance upon the empire. This event did really occur, though at a much later period; but all that was to precede that event—the quarter whence the new principle would rise up in the world, that was to overcome Rome herself and regenerate mankind—all this was certainly not anticipated by any Roman of those times, however generous and exalted might be his sentiments, and profound and penetrative

his understanding. Nay, when this phenomenon did actually appear, it was but too evident that they were at first unable to seize and comprehend its meaning and purport. And what was then that new power, which was to conquer, and did really conquer, the earthly conquerors of the world? The old universal empire of Persia, and the subsequent one of Macedon, had long since passed away, and disappeared from the face of the earth. The oppressive military despotism of Rome had to fear no rival that would at all equal her in power. The influence of the Greek Philosophy, which had previously sunk into great degeneracy, was completely debased under the yoke of Roman domination, and barely sufficed to adorn and dignify the Roman sway, still less to work a fundamental change and reform in the Roman government.

It was the divine power of Love, tried in sufferings, and sacrificing to high Love itself not only life, but every earthly desire; and from which proceeded the new words of a new life, a new light of moral and divine science, that was to unfold new views of the world, introduce a new organization of society, and give a new form to human existence. And such was that primitive energy of Christian love, which displayed itself in the internal harmony, and close union of the Christian church; in the rapid diffusion of its doctrines through all the countries and among all the nations of the then

known world; in its courageous resistance to all the assaults of persecution; in the careful preservation of its purity from all alloy and corruption; in its firmer consolidation and more manifold development in words, and works and deeds; in writings and in life; that not many generations, and but a few centuries had passed away, before Christianity became a ruling power in the world—an indirect and spiritual power indeed, but more than any other active and influential.

A passage on Elias in the Old Testament, which we have already had occasion to cite, may be applied to the imperceptible beginnings of this great moral revolution, produced in the world by a new effort of God's power. When the prophet, from the bottom of his soul had sighed after death, and had journeyed for the space of forty days towards the holy mountain of Horeb, the splendour and omnipotence of the Deity were revealed to him, and passed before his mortal eyes. There came a great and strong wind, which overthrew the mountains and split the rocks; but, as the scripture saith, God was not in the wind. There came afterwards a violent earthquake with fire—but God was neither in the earthquake, nor in the fire. Now there arose the soft breath and gentle whistling of a tender air: in this, Elias recognized the immediate presence of his God, and in awe and reverence he veiled his face. Such was the origin

of Christianity, as compared with the all-subduing and world-convulsing sway of the conquering nations of preceding ages.

In the last years of Augustus, the first deified Emperor—occurs the birth of our Saviour in the time of Tiberius, the foundation of the Christian religion;—and in the reign of Nero, the first perfectly authentic record of that great event in the Roman history. There is indeed an account which says that, previously, Tiberius, on the report of the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, had received information of the new religion, and had made a formal proposal to the Senate to place Christ among the Gods, according to the Roman custom, and to declare him worthy of divine honours. It is true indeed, that the single testimony of Tertullian, on which this account rests, is not of such weight and historical importance as not to be obnoxious to many serious doubts, which perhaps however, have been carried somewhat too far. It still remains a clear historical testimony on a matter of fact; and as long as this is susceptible of a natural explanation, it argues a perverse spirit of historical criticism, or rather a total absence of all criticism, to be ever suspecting fabrications, and supposititious writings. That an account of this great event might, nay must almost necessarily, have been transmitted to Rome by the Roman Procurator of the province of Judea, is proved by the narrative of Tacitus,

who connects the name of this governor with the first mention of the Christians. Such an account may have been easily sent even by the Roman captains, who were in Palestine, and one of whom we know, as an eye-witness, gave such a memorable testimony in favour of the Son of God, who had died upon the cross; for, according to the general tradition of the church, this man afterwards became a Christian. There is again in the character of Tiberius nothing at all at variance with this account; for however dark, and mistrustful, and cruel, and corrupt might be the character of that Emperor, we cannot deny he was possessed of a powerful and profound understanding. He was by no means unsusceptible of religious impressions, nor indifferent on matters of religion; but he followed therein his own peculiar views and opinions; and hence it is quite natural that his attention should be easily drawn to any extraordinary religious event. He detested, and even persecuted the Egyptian idolatry, and the Jewish worship, and ordered that the sacerdotal robes and sacred vessels of their priests should be burned. He had a strong faith in destiny, was somewhat addicted to astrology, and dreaded signs in the heavens. If his hostility towards the Jews and his persecution of that nation, be alledged as an objection to the truth of this narrative, (as if it were absolutely necessary that he should have confounded the Christians with

the Jews); we may reply that this is a purely arbitrary hypothesis, and that it is far more natural to conclude that, when Tiberius had received from Pilate, or other Roman captains, certain intelligence of the life and death of our Saviour, he was no doubt informed by these eye-witnesses of the hatred and persecution which our Saviour had sustained from the Jews. The single fact indeed, that Christianity was so much opposed to the Pagan worship and the political idolatry of the Romans — as for instance to the sacrifice before the image of the Emperor—was in all probability not stated nor clearly explained in this first account, composed by persons very little acquainted with the true nature of the new Revelation. Otherwise such an account would have produced on a man imbued with Roman prejudices no other impression but that of aversion and disgust. The idea and proposal itself of regarding an extraordinary man endowed with wonderful and divine power, as God and as worthy of divine honours, has nothing at all improbable in itself, or at all inconsistent with Roman rites and usages, or with Roman opinions respecting Gods and deified men. The only thing really improbable in the whole affair, is that the Senate of that time should have dared to oppose and contradict Tiberius in this matter. However, if the Senate, as we may easily imagine, were hostile to the proposal of Tiberius, it was easy for them to

adopt some evasive form, and indirectly to impede and set aside this matter, which as it regarded old national rites, fell entirely within their jurisdiction. But this circumstance, as we said before, is the only thing which appears at all exaggerated in this account. It is easy to understand from this how the proposition of Tiberius, which was never carried into execution, should have fallen into complete oblivion, and should never have come to the knowledge of Tacitus; as we may conclude, from his account of the Christians, that he would not otherwise have suffered this circumstance to pass unnoticed. Singular and remarkable as this fact may be, it is of no importance in itself; it forms only a single incident in the strange and contradictory impressions which the new religion produced on the minds of the Romans. A passage of Suetonius, in his history of Claudius, would show that the Christians were confounded with the Jews, for, speaking of that Emperor, he says, "he expelled the Jews from the Capital, for, at the instigation of *Chrestus*, they were ever exciting troubles in the state." *Chrestus* in the Greek pronunciation, has the same sound with Christus; and we may easily conceive that what the Christians said of their invisible Lord and Master, that he interdicted them such and such Pagan rites, may in a matter so totally strange and unintelligible to the Romans, have been easily misunderstood, as applying to a

chief and party-leader actually in existence. In the same way, by the troubles spoken of in the passage above cited, may be understood the accustomed and just refusal of the Christians to comply with the illicit demands of the Pagans.

A fuller light is thrown on this subject by the narrative of Tacitus in his history of Nero; and, however much the Christian religion may be misrepresented by the Roman historian, his account has still a character thoroughly historical, and amidst its very misrepresentations, is perfectly intelligible, if we take care to distinguish the chief historical traits. When Nero, at the height of his crimes and presumption had set Rome on fire, in order to have a lively and dramatic spectacle of the burning of Troy, he afterwards strove to screen himself from the odium of this misdeed, and to throw the blame entirely upon the Christians, who must have been then tolerably numerous in Rome. Tacitus thinks they were not the authors of the conflagration laid to their charge; and his feelings revolt at the inhuman cruelties which Nero inflicted upon them; but, he adds, many horrible things were said of them, and that it was known in particular they were animated by sentiments of hatred towards the whole human race. That we are to understand by this hatred towards the human race nothing more than that rigid rejection by the Christians of all the idolatrous

rites, maxims and doctrines of the Heathen world, is perfectly evident of itself. Among the horrible things, of which the Christians were accused, we are in all probability to understand *the repasts of Thyestes*, for their enemies make use of that very term in their accusations;—accusations which were received with eager credulity by a populace that held them in abhorrence. Although this charge was no doubt afterwards the effect of malicious calumny, and deliberate falsehood, yet it is very possible that a gross misconception may originally have given rise to it, and that this accusation, egregiously false as it was, proceeded from an obscure and confused knowledge of the mystery of the holy sacrifice, and of the reception of the Sacrament in that divine feast of love solemnized in the Christian assemblies.

Even in the official report, which the better and well-meaning younger Pliny transmitted to Trajan in the year 120, while he was governor of Pontus and Bithynia, we can clearly discern the embarrassment of the generous Roman, who was at a loss how to consider the new religion, so perfectly mysterious and totally inexplicable did it appear to him; and who in consequence was quite undetermined what he was to do, and how he was to treat the matter. He writes that, according to the confessions wrung from the Christians by torture, after the Roman custom, they were found to en-

tertain an excessive, strange, heterogeneous, and very perverse, faith or superstition; but that in other respects they were people of irreproachable morals, and who on a certain day of the week, Sunday, assembled in the morning to sing the praises of their God Christ, and to engage themselves to the fulfilment of the most important precepts of virtue, and that they met again in the evening to enjoy a simple and blameless repast. He adds that their numbers had already increased to such an extent that the altars of Paganism were nearly abandoned; and that a great number of women, boys and children belonged to their sect. He is at a loss to know, with respect to the latter, whether he should make any difference in the degree of punishment which, it appears, they have inevitably incurred under the old Roman laws against all societies and fraternities not sanctioned by the state; and on this subject he demands further instructions from the emperor, in this memorable official letter, which is still extant, and contains the most ancient portrait of the Christians drawn by a Roman hand.

Thus then, in this period of the world, in this decisive crisis between ancient and modern times, in this great central point of history, stood two powers opposed to each other:—on one hand, we behold Tiberius, Caligula and Nero, the earthly gods, and absolute masters of the world, in all the pomp and splendor of ancient

paganism—standing, as it were, on the very summit and verge of the old world, now tottering to its ruin:—and, on the other hand, we trace the obscure rise of an almost imperceptible point of Light, from which the whole modern world was to spring, and whose further progress and full development, through all succeeding ages, constitutes the true purport of *modern history*.

END OF VOL. I.

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